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THE PERSIAN TALE

"O firm, sound earth," mused Hafiz in the waste,
"Strong refuge from all treachery of the sky!"
A dull, blunt head the heaving rocks displaced,
"Nay," breathed a voice, "But Ruin—here am I!"

Talks on Criticism

II

IT is the dominating interest of the writer that has always determined the nature of his criticism. He can no more escape from his age than the preacher, the soldier, or the philosopher. That passionate excitement over the classics which now seems a little absurd to us in the books of the Renaissance, was inevitable in a civilization remaking a world that had not been urbane and sophisticated since the decline of Rome. Horace and Aristotle were more than names, they were symbols. Moral philosophy, which was the great subject of the eighteenth century, controls and directs the literary criticism of the age from Addison to Dr. Johnson. Even profligates and atheists pick up their books by the moral ear and are not content until they have reduced them to moral values.

We eclectic moderns are not so eclectic as we seem. The serious critic, who foreswears journalism, scorns to play up to the immediate interests of the reader, and searches only for Truth, is not so free as he thinks. He may escape from the tyranny of the mass mind if he is content to write for the few, but he cannot escape the subtle influences of his period, except by sticking his head in the sands of an earlier century. Like our architects, he must work with steel and industrialism, or produce *pastiches*, lovely and erudite perhaps, but neither vital nor significant.

The serious criticism of the twentieth century is dominated by experimental science. This does not mean that our criticism has to be scientific in the laboratory sense in order to be right; it means that where criticism is alive and vigorous in our day, it is as inevitably attracted toward scientific thinking as the copper brush toward the electro-magnet.

The science that obsesses the literary man has varied from decade to decade. In the 'seventies it was biology, and from about that date flowed into criticism all those ideas of evolutionary processes in literary forms which now are so familiar that we speak of the *growth* of the short story or the *development* of the drama with no idea that other ages never associated growth in its biological sense with the expressions of art. In the early twentieth century, psychology displaced biology as the literary magnet; and when in our day psychology began to concern itself with the nature of the personality and the causes of human behavior, the new psychology drove out the old in literary circles even while the scientists themselves were still in drawn battle. It is, indeed, the strength and appositeness of a scientific theory, not necessarily its truth, that gives it attractiveness for criticism. The critic is looking for help in his problems of analysis and synthesis. Give him a tool that is useful and he will not inquire too curiously as to how it is made. And he is usually right. Both novelists and critics accepted far too readily a theory of the universality of the evolutionary principle as Herbert Spencer explained it. The biology of their books was often unsound. But the new viewpoint enabled them to learn new things about literature. Overemphasis had the effect of a magnifying glass. They were wrong when, like Zola, they thought they were writing science, but they profited in insight. The same is true of the contemporary popularity of complexes, fixations, and the like. Knotty human nature, approached with these formidable instruments, has yielded fresh fruit. Behaviorism, which as a scientific theory is still dubious, and likely to become more so, as a scientific technique, a method of experiment, has already given most interesting information as to the actions and motives of the mind. In criticism also it is revealing. One does not have to accept the behaviorist philosophy in order to restudy "Tom Jones" in the light of what has been learned of the springs of human action from the behaviorists' experiments.

* * *

It is not therefore the accuracy of scientific theory in literary criticism but its dominance in our period which we discuss here. Let the question of truth wait while we point out a fact. It will be found that every constructive critic of seminal influence in our day, whether de Gourmont or Paul Valéry, Croce, I. A. Richards, or the late Stuart P. Sherman, has related himself in vital fashion to modern science—has advocated a psychological, or social, or anthropological, or ethnological, or biological, or economic view of literature, which amounts to reconsidering literature from new angles. This is the reason why pure esthetic criticism—the study and pursuit of the beautiful—has languished. Esthetics is but just coming under scientific scrutiny. It has been left till now a study in absolutes not involved in the new questions of man's senses and their real nature. We have been investigating races, classes, economic influences, primitive inheritances, neuroses, and the flux of matter—not the beautiful; and our criticism has followed the scientists because our critics, being their fellow men, have had the same interests.

The dangers of this pursuit of science—caught often by one leg only—and sometimes, like the lizard, by a tail from which the life blood has already departed, will be discussed later. But before

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Biography as an Art

By JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS

IT is possible that the simple naturalness of the biographic art, originating in personal narration or casual gossip, has prevented it from being considered as esthetically artificial and idiosyncratic as the epic, lyric, drama, novel, or essay. At any rate, with all the pother about other forms, almost nothing has been written about biography as an art. James C. Johnston in his volume* just issued has made the first elaborate effort to establish it as a separate one worthy of critical analysis and study. In his whole review of the literature in three languages dealing with biography as a form he is, however, able to list only fifteen essays, several of which are merely short articles of a few pages each and others of which deal with autobiography rather than biography proper. In no other field of literary endeavor are we so in need of careful and sanely critical analysis of all the problems involved.

But if biography as a literary form has never attracted the serious attention of the literary critic, it would nevertheless be a mistake to think that any of its manifestations are new. Literary currents ebb and flow, and partly because of the multitudinous changes in the mere mechanics of living and partly because of the substitution of science and the modern languages for history and the classics in education, our new collegians are too apt to measure by decades rather than by ages. If there is any word which more than another is coming to send a shiver down the susceptible spine of a man who has an historical background, it is the word "new," so sweated in literary shops,—the "new history," the "new freedom," the "new biography." There is

*Biography: The Literature of Personality. By James C. Johnston. New York: The Century Co. 1927. $2.50.

This Week

Drawing. By *W. A. Dwiggins.*
Quatrain. By *William Rose Benét.*
"The Cambridge Platonists." Reviewed by *Paul Elmer More.*
"Escape." Reviewed by *Oliver M. Sayler.*
"The New Reformation." Reviewed by *Henry A. Perkins.*
"Our Times." Reviewed by *Allan Nevins.*
"The Counterfeiters." Reviewed by *Theodore Purdy, Jr.*
The Palette Knife. By *Christopher Morley.*

Next Week, or Later

The Younger Generation. By *Frank Swinnerton.*

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nothing fundamentally new in any form of biography written at the present time.

It is true that the school which has practised biography for what a recent reviewer has called "monumental or exemplary purposes" has been the most prolific in all periods. Plutarch in his "Life of Pericles" wrote that "our intellectual vision must be applied to such objects as, by their very charm, invite it onward to its own proper good. Such objects are to be found in virtuous deeds; these implant in those who search them out a great and zealous eagerness which leads to imitation;" and for that reason he decided to persevere in his writing of biographies. On the other hand, one must be ignorant of or merely ignore a vast amount of writing in the past to say, as does Robert Morss Lovett, that "only under the influence of modern realism has the biographer been permitted to approach his public on the side of its strongest interest—that in human experience—and to make use of the most exciting part of his hero's experience—that in which he departed from the accepted *mores*."

Such a sentence makes one both question and wonder. Has Mr. Lovett never read the "Lives of the Caesars" by Suetonius? Certainly no "new biographies" have been franker in revealing the most secret sins of their subjects. Or has he forgotten the autobiography of St. Augustine in which he recounts, among other things, his abnormal sexual longings and practices with an openness that only a hardened "new biographer" would compete with? As compared with a few decades ago, we have adopted new methods of selection and emphasis in writing lives, but that is the mere ebb and flow of style as measured by a generation or two, not by the history of the art. Both Woodward and Parson Weems, in their lives of Washington, were heirs of long lines of different methods in the practice of the art. One line of traditional method produced most examples a generation ago; the other produces more today. That is all. The real question comes back, in its only critical sense, to the validity of the two methods and a question of standards.

* * *

Is biography, by presenting a noble life in its noblest aspects, to serve, teaching by example, to incite readers to emulate such lives, or is its chief purpose to be, as Sir Sidney Lee said, to "transmit a personality"? A good deal more may be said, perhaps, for the first view, that of Plutarch and his school, than our present iconoclastic and cynical age may be willing to admit, but as few people at the moment do admit it, we may pass to an analysis of the second biographical goal.

"To transmit a personality." Here we have the crux of the whole problem of biographical writing as most practised today. What *is* a personality?

In spite of the deliquescence of so many of our old ideas and standards, people are still more or less agreed as to what is noble and fine, or at least as to what was noble and fine before 1914. The Plutarchian biographer thus has his selection of data fairly sharply defined, but the Suetonian of the twentieth century is completely at sea, as is shown by dozens of biographies published in the last five years. Many of these have been announced as "the true" so and so or as showing us "the real man." The writer of this school does not have to decide merely what is a noble deed but the far more complex problem of what is a man. In addition he has the two technical problems of what facts to select among the mass he finds relative to his subject and how to present them.

I have read and reviewed a very considerable proportion of the biographies of recent years and I am convinced that scarcely one of the writers—there are exceptions—has posed and answered to himself the fundamental question what is a man, that is, what are the human qualities which may be considered of the highest intrinsic worth or which serve best to etch in the outlines of a personality? We will, therefore, in part leave aside this question and consider it only obliquely by examining the technical methods employed of late. In the case of practically every modern biographical subject there is a wealth of material relating to the sitter, from among which a selection has to be made by the biographer. It would seem philosophically impossible to make such a selection in order to portray the "true" or "real" man without having settled first the problem of what "a man" *is*. Nevertheless, the publishers assure us that the trick is constantly turned. On what basis do I find the selection usually to be made? Exactly on that predicated by the reviewer already quoted, namely, that the most exciting part of a hero's career is that in which he departs from the accepted *mores*. But could there possibly be a cheaper or more absurd standard by which to value a man's life? The "accepted *mores*" change from time to time. The complex of *mores* was one thing in the reign of Charles the Second; it was another in the reign of Queen Victoria; it is a different thing, again, in the reign of Calvin Coolidge. Is the serious biographer, whose aim is to transmit to posterity "a personality" or to present for us today a "personality" of the past, to be governed in his selection of facts by counting as most "exciting" or important those which illustrate the points in which his hero departs from the accepted *mores* of his moment? In point of actual practice, what many current biographers are doing is to distort the picture even more by dwelling on the points in which their heroes of the *past* departed from the *mores* of *today*. In a sample of this so-called "modern" biography, (which in fact is often simply unphilosophical, unpsychological, and technically poor biography), which I reviewed last year, Russell's "Benjamin Franklin," I found that five pages were devoted to Franklin's hoaxing skit on the trial of Polly Baker for bastardy whereas less than one page was given to his plan for the union of the American colonies; that some of his most important writings were ignored in order to give space to his "Advice to Young Men on the Choice of a Mistress;" and so on in similar proportions throughout his career.

Do I claim that such matters have no place and that the subjects of biography should be draped in togas and not depicted in every day clothes? By no means. I have myself dwelt in my writing on episodes which many people would suppress, and have praised highly certain biographies which have probed deeply into the hidden and unpleasant parts of men's hearts and lives. Where then are we to draw the line? It seems to me that there are two distinct and clear cut standards of inclusion of what we might call damning facts. One of these has to do not so much with the subject himself as it has with the biographies of his contemporaries in the case of a historical character. For example, if the biographers of John Hancock should paint him as a saint, they will make it appear that such of his distinguished contemporaries as distrusted him must have been animated by jealousy or some other ignoble motive. The fact is that Hancock was not a great character, that, among other things, it was contemporaneously well-known that he embezzled the funds of Harvard University while treasurer, and that, for various other reasons, the leading men of the time had a right to distrust him. To whitewash Hancock, is, *ipso facto*, to besmirch his distrusting contemporaries. In the same way, if one paints all Washington's generals and subordinates as faithful and efficient officers and patriots, their biographers rob Washington of the glory of having worked and won with many inefficient and unworthy instruments. It is obviously unfair to take away deserved glory from the deserving in order to give undeserved glory to the undeserving.

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Where such a problem does not exist and it is merely a question of what to include in a private life, I would say that the test to be employed is whether the facts in question had any real and lasting influence on the man himself, his career and personality. The main object of biography is not to serve as an exhibit in a medical clinic. The physicians should gather and tabulate their own cases. What the biographer has to do is to present a personality. Take, for example, the question of sex, which seems to be all-absorbing at present. Suppose our subject had had a single episode with a girl of the streets when nineteen, that shortly after that he married and lived happily with his wife ever after. Suppose, on the other hand, that in another case in a man's later career he had a *liaison* lasting for years which profoundly affected his whole life and work. In the one case, the facts may be of the deepest significance; in the other of no significance whatever. The sole test should be, not the pornographic or even emotional interest of the episode in itself but the importance of it as one of the items selected by which the biographer is trying to build up a picture of an idiosyncratic personality. It is this love of the episode for the episode's sake that damns so many current biographies and distorts the subject into no resemblance to the original. In the earlier lives of Franklin, one gains the impression of a grave philosopher; in the latest, of a somewhat ribald and obscene minded old roisterer. Both are wrong but I am inclined to believe the older distortion comes nearer to the truth than the later. It is right to paint Cromwell with all his warts but to give the warts an ounce more of weight than is called for by their influence on the man's career or personality is to paint the warts and not the man, and the business of a biographer is to paint the man.

Of course, we are always led back to the fundamental question, *what is a man?* A biographer who aims to be anything more than a quick-selling journalist must face and solve this problem. Many current biographers do it implicitly by assuming that "intimacy" and "human interest" consist in watching the man perform his lowest physical or mental acts. This is in itself a phase of that profound disillusionment which came from the discovery that the earth was not the center of the universe and, some centuries later, that man was not created but evolved. Having accepted the as yet by no means proved theory that man is of no lasting or cosmic importance, the tendency is to consider that there is no difference in value between the operation of the bowels and those of the brain. If there is not, then why bother about either, except for the fact that the biographer must use the one to fill the other—an obvious explanation of much current biographical writing? It is clear that the competent biographer has got to think out a philosophy of man and nature before he can select his facts.

* * *

Once selected, how is he to treat them? For one thing, as we have pointed out, the subject should not be considered as a medical case. In R. V. Harlow's life of Samuel Adams the facts that his voice occasionally rose to falsetto and that his hands trembled were used to explain the whole of his career, and no small part of the American Revolution, as due to the mental states of a neurotic, according to the then current but already somewhat discredited psychology. In an elaborate life, not yet published, of one of our greatest statesmen the author wrote two chapters to prove his subject was at times insane. He then asked the opinion of one of the country's best known psychiatrists on the subject. The psychiatrist told me he informed the author that it would be a delicate matter to decide even if the living patient were before him for examination; in the case of this dead man it was utterly impossible of proof. Each new fad finds its way into biography, and the subconscious, for example, has been made to play its part. To that sort of thing there is no end. If we are to write biographies in terms of unconscious complexes and the subconscious, why not in terms of biology, of chemistry, or even in terms of the aggregate dance of atoms which constitute the "physical" John Smith? Any man may be considered scientifically from many standpoints, but I contest that to consider him from that of the unconscious, of biological functions, of chemical reactions, or of atomic structure is not biography. Once we leave the realm of self-conscious life and of observable and recorded acts, we become lost in a descending scale of possible scientific approaches, and have abandoned the clearly defined field of biographical treatment.

Again, are we to give up the old-fashioned idea of recording the ascertainable facts of a man's life and substitute a biographer's appreciation of his character? This method of presentation, the old "character" under modern names, is no newer than any other form of biography, in spite of the acclaim of certain practitioners today. The difficulty with it lies largely in the practitioner. It is obvious that the mere "facts" may not give us the whole man, the essence of his character, but there is just as much danger, if not more, that the "appreciation" may give us the man, not as he was, but as distorted or refracted through the mind of his biographer, just as a portrait gives us his physical features with the psychological traits imagined by the artist; in other words a composite portrait of sitter and painter. In the case of a superb master of his craft we may gain a deeper and more veracious insight into the soul of the sitter from a portrait than from a photograph but in the case of a poor painter we may gain far less, and there is always the question of how much of what we see is the sitter and how much the painter. A superb biographer may play the artist; an ordinary craftsman had better play the photographer of the obvious. In such a recent work, for example, as Howden Smith's life of Vanderbilt, it

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is impossible to tell, with all the imaginary conversations and interpretations thrown in, how much of the picture is Vanderbilt and how much Smith, and, in my opinion for that very reason it is worthless except as Smith's opinion of Vanderbilt, which in itself is a matter of little or no importance.

An entire essay might be written on style as part of the method of presentation, but perhaps nothing I could say would teach the would-be biographer as much as would a careful reading of Smith's book, just alluded to, and Johnson's "Andrew Jackson," published last month. Both authors had to deal with self-made men, rather rough and uncouth in some of their aspects. Smith tries to achieve his effect by filling his pages *ad nauseam* with God Damns, Christs!, and other oaths and obscenity. Johnson without a single oath gives us just as clear an idea that Jackson's language at times was appalling and he conveys all the frontier roughnesses of the man, but at the same time he penetrates to his soul as Smith does not. With all Smith's attempted realism in treatment, Vanderbilt remains at best a generalized type; Johnson, with his artistry, gives us an individual. No other two recent books are more instructive in their contrasted methods, and one only has to think how a man like Smith would have dealt with Rachel Jackson, and then study how Johnson has dealt with her, to realize the difference between journalism and literary art. Johnson's fifteenth chapter—"How a Lover celebrated his Lady by saying Nothing"—is a little masterpiece and might well serve as a model for "new" biographers who study love in Freud and not in life.

The two volumes offer another contrast worth pondering. Cornelius Vanderbilt was an extremely low type of the human animal and interesting only as an economic factor. Jackson, rough and quixotic, was a personality with elements of great ness. This introduces the question of the biographical subject. No great biography can be written about a small man. Here, again, many modern biographers are being led astray by the lure of the episode. Just as in writing the lives of great men they emphasize the unessential or misleading but sensational episode for the episode's, not the man's, sake, so they choose subjects unimportant and uninteresting in themselves merely because they can rake out of their careers enough episodes to sell their books. It has been said of a play that if you can only have the audience sitting on the edge of their seats for thirty seconds somewhere in the five acts, it makes no difference about the rest. This is the theory of such modern biographers as write, not to produce a fine bit of biographical art, but to send Johnny to college or buy their wives a Spanish shawl.

It is impossible in three thousand words to discuss adequately the subject of biography as a form of literature. We have shelves full of volumes on almost every other. It is high time that someone should attempt to treat the biographical, and to clarify both the philosophy and technique of what is rapidly becoming one of the most popular and prolific of all literary forms.

The Platonic Tradition

THE CAMBRIDGE PLATONISTS. By Frederick J. Powicke. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 1927.

Reviewed by Paul Elmer More

THIS unpretentious work may be taken as a worthy pendent, so the author himself suggests, to the "Platonic Tradition in English Religious Thought," recently reviewed in these columns, in which Dean Inge paid a noble tribute to the Cambridge Platonists of the seventeenth century as representing a rare and characteristic, yet too little regarded, segment of the Anglican Church. Dr. Powicke is modest, too modest, in his claims. He "makes no pretence at all to be complete, and aims at nothing more than to express those aspects of the subject which struck" him "most and have seemed most relevant to" his "own needs;" he even admits that he has not read the whole of the (not very voluminous) literature with which he deals. His treatise in fact will not supplant the more exhaustive volumes of Principal Tulloch; but it is excellent within its limits, and for the ordinary reader sufficiently complete and quite the best thing in the field. His quotations are full and well selected, particularly illuminating for Whichcote and John Smith, less so for Henry More; his discussion of the questions raised by the philosophical attitude of these men towards religion is in the main clear and penetrating, on some points rightly corrective of Tulloch; his account of the political and academic atmosphere in which the new Platonism spread its light, as a lantern in a gusty night, is highly interesting, though perhaps it could have been a little more concrete. In my judgment he might well have omitted the chapter on Peter Sterry and given the space to John Norris, or if not Norris, about whom he has published a separate study, then to some other philosopher or divine or poet (*e.g.*, Henry Vaughan) more loosely connected with the movement. I make this criticism, the most serious, perhaps, that can be directed against the book, but I confess that the writings of Sterry are not known to me at first hand, and that my opinion is formed from what appears in the chapter criticized.

Dr. Powicke's treatise, following Dean Inge's and falling in with others of a kindred spirit, gives an indication of the growing interest today in the more or less mystical aspects of religion, and is calculated to direct that interest to what is on the whole, I think, its most wholesome source within the range of English literature. But neither Dr. Powicke nor any of his predecessors has quite explained the causes of the failure of this revival of Platonism to establish itself continuously in English thought. The tragic fact is that this movement,

Illustration by Else Hasselriis, for "The Wind That Wouldn't Blow," by Arthur Bowie Chrisman (Dutton).

See page 305.

fine and sincere, intrinsically, quickly degenerated into, or became absorbed in, the tide of deism which swept through the eighteenth century. Why did this happen? Why should its beautiful tolerance, based on a distinction between the fundamentals and the accessories of Christianity, have sunk into something like indifference, its insistence on the reasonableness of faith into a dry rationalism, its sense of the importance of moral purity as the *sine qua non* of spiritual intuition into Stoic moralism? Partly, no doubt, because of a certain looseness of thinking in the men themselves, more especially their inability to discriminate sharply between the various uses of the word "reason" and to disentangle the philosophy of Plato from the metaphysics of Plotinus. And this is about the same as saying that, with all their sporadic charm of expression and fineness of insight, no one of them possessed the commanding intellectual power needed for real leadership. One feels this particularly in the case of Henry More, the greatest and most admired of them all, whose works today are in large part almost unreadable, yet whose life and character, as recorded in the biography by Richard Ward, are among the most precious things in English history.

It is the merit of such works as Dean Inge's and Dr. Powicke's that in a measure they redeem this tragic failure, and restore these pure spirits to the place they could not maintain for themselves.

The Play of the Week

By Oliver M. Sayler

ESCAPE, a Play in a Prologue and Two Parts. By John Galsworthy. Produced by Winthrop Ames at the Booth Theatre, New York, October 26, 1927. Charles Scribner's Sons. New York. 1927. $1.

Reviewed from Performance and Published Manuscript

IF John Galsworthy is any more in earnest than Bernard Shaw in his announced intention of relinquishing his dramatic pen, he has closed the chapter of his career as a playwright on one of those clear and vibrant notes which any artist might choose for his exit from labor. Twenty-fifth of his theatrical canon and nineteenth of his full-length plays, "Escape," which has finally reached us from London at the hands of the producer who gave us his "Strife," "The Pigeon," and "Old English," epitomizes in mature, skilful, and richly satisfying degree those distinctive qualities which we have come to expect in a Galsworthy play.

Gratefully accepting the code of those characteristics from R. H. Coats in his recent stimulating critical study, "John Galsworthy as a Dramatic Artist," we may proceed at once to examine "Escape" for its sincerity, its sympathy, its impartiality, its irony, its pity and indignation, and its artistry. The scoring on these points, it seems to me, readily admits this play of accidental crime, conviction, flight, pursuit, and surrender to the ranks of the author's major works for the stage. As such a major work, it is slightly overdue, for they have appeared roughly in cycles of three: "Strife" was Galsworthy's third play; "Justice," his sixth; "The Pigeon," his eighth; "The Skin Game," his twelfth; "Loyalties," his fourteenth; and "Escape," as I have said, his nineteenth.

Sincerity, I think, may be taken for granted at this late date in any work by Galsworthy. The war with its partisan mandates wreaked no ultimate damage to his artistic integrity. There are reasons deeper than the improvement of public taste among readers and playgoers for his latterly increased vogue. In fact, his most veracious, conscientious, and artistically significant work, both in fiction and in drama, has been produced since the war.

* * *

In the nature of its story, "Escape" ranks high in sympathy. Matt Denant, gentleman and ex-captain, fells a plain-clothes officer in Hyde Park in quixotic defense of a street walker. The fall is fatal; he is committed for homicide. After a year in Dartmoor Prison Farm, he bolts his warders and becomes the quarry of the countryside. "Escape" thenceforward is a *tour de force* in dramatic sympathy. With no false sentimentality, the author "feels with" his human hare, just as do the majority of those whose path the fugitive Matt crosses. Likewise, he "feels with" those whose scruples war with their sympathies. It is here that Galsworthy's meticulous impartiality enters to discriminate among the diverse reactions aroused by young Denant in flight; to observe in general the more impersonal tolerance of the well-born and the well-bred—the county—for their like in distress, and the severity, suspicion, and hostility of farmer, laborer, and cockney; to convey in particular the exceptions to these class reactions and the subtle gradations from headlong assistance through philosophic or sentimental fellow-feeling on to instinctive antipathy and bigoted hatred.

Such a sequence of scenes on the moor, unfolded with the breathless pace and suspense of the chase, teems with opportunities for dramatic irony which the author capitalizes in staccato dialogue or indicated gesture that is amusingly contradictory and paradoxically real—the innocence of the fatal blow; the warders' strangle hold on each other in the dark as Matt eludes them; his self-betrayal to the elderly jurist by the river bank; the dispute of the genteel sisters over their vanished apple of discord; the quandary of the parson over his divided conscience.

To the extent that Galsworthy's pity and indignation are subdued in "Escape," I think it is the greater work of dramatic literature. I do not agree with Coats in wholly absolving all his plays from the taint of propaganda. Galsworthy has never juggled or dissembled themes, situations, or character to prove a point. But he has in the past assembled unique themes, situations, and character to appear typical and prove a point. It is this blemish on his earlier play about a convict, "Justice," which brands

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it as inferior artistically to "Escape," although it is unquestionably a more flaming and potent social dcument. The moral conclusions of "Escape" are tacit except for Denant's axiomatic capitulation: "It's one's decent *self* one can't escape."

It would be easy to dwell indefinitely on the technical skill of the mature and resourceful artist that has been lavished on "Escape." Hardly a line or a phrase that is not eloquent of this genius for taking pains, this rigorous economy and self-mastery, this art that conceals art. Two phases of this skill, however, demand attention. One of them is the successful repudiation of the traditional dictum that characters shall not be introduced momentarily without their subsequent repercussion upon the action. "Escape" defies this maxim egregiously. Character after character moves into the light and is gone. Matt Denant alone remains—the single figure who gives form and design to the play. Only by such a radical course, however, could the author have so brilliantly depicted the atmosphere and rhythm of headlong flight.

The other most notable evidence of artistic skill is the burden which Galsworthy, as so often before, has thrown on the actor. This is no lazy abdication on the part of the playwright, but literary creation in the peculiar terms of the theatre. It is not every actor who can play Galsworthy, who can respond to this challenge. But Mr. Ames has assembled and drilled a cast who pick up the bare but pregnant word and conjure it into the sublimation of life which is the theatre. This is, of course, most vividly, most excitingly true of the young English actor, Leslie Howard, whose poignantly veracious portrait of Matt Denant, on top of his volatile impersonation in "Her Cardboard Lover" last season, marks him as the chief rival of Alfred Lunt among our younger players.

* * *

"Escape," with its seventeen male characters and nine female, affords interesting commentary on Mr. Ames's contention, to which I referred last week, that John Galsworthy is originally responsible on the English-speaking stage, at least, for the decline of the repertory company by writing plays that disregard the regularly balanced composition of such a company. Only by casting six actors for a total of fourteen rôles, as Mr. Ames has been able to do because of the processional nature of their appearance, could a repertory company produce this play. The mean of all of Galsworthy's plays is much more positive proof of the charge. In the nineteen full-length plays there are approximately 250 male characters and 100 female, an average of thirteen male and five female to a play. It must be evident to anyone that most repertory companies would have to forego such plays as "Strife," with twenty-three men, not counting the mob, and seven women; "Justice" and "The Forest," in both of which the score stands at seventeen to one; "Old English," at twenty-eight to five; and "Loyalties," at seventeen to three.

I am not prepared without much longer study to interpret fully this phenomenon in the plays of Galsworthy. Is it possible that, as in "Escape," he regards man with his multiform, ubiquitous, and kaleidoscopic life as more germane than woman to the clashes, conflicts, and catastrophes of drama, as contrasted with prose narrative? I have no data at hand, but I doubt whether his novels would disclose a like discrepancy, committing him to a temperamental preference for depicting his own sex.

Mr. Sayler will review "The Ivory Door," by A. A. Milne, and "If," by Lord Dunsany, next week.

What is believed to be the largest book in the world (says *John O'London's Weekly*) is now safely housed in the British Museum. Taller than the average man, it is a great atlas which was presented to Charles II. by the merchants of Amsterdam as a memento of his visit to the Netherlands, where he found refuge after the fall of the monarchy. This great book is a beautiful specimen of the printer's art. The inscriptions and texts on the map are in Latin, and the maps themselves are surprisingly accurate, considering the age in which they were made.

Gabriele Reuter, one of Germany's authors of best sellers, has also produced a melodramatic tale in her "Töchter" (Berlin: Ullstein), a tale of two generations. The book has little value as literature, but it is interesting as reflecting the post-war mental attitudes of Germany.

Studies in Science

THE NEW REFORMATION. By MICHAEL PUPIN. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by HENRY A. PERKINS
Trinity College

IT is seldom that a serious work dealing with science and religion is so revealing of the author's personality as "The New Reformation." In his autobiography, "From Immigrant to Inventor," Professor Pupin showed us much of himself, and we learned to love the Serbian boy listening to the messages of nature on his native hillsides, and to admire the energy and scientific ability of the mature physicist and inventor. But in this more recent book, we can see far deeper into the soul of a very remarkable man, who is at once scientist, poet, and seer, and possessed of a heart far too big to be cramped by the mathematical rigidity of the exact science he professes.

The introductory chapter of "The New Reformation" is an historical outline of the movement which culminated, as regards religion, in the Protestant Reformation, and, as regards science, in the school of Sir Isaac Newton; a movement away from the blind acceptance of authority and of scholastic deductions from the dogmatism of Aristotle and his followers, toward individualism and the inductive method of scientific investigation.

In the succeeding four chapters we are given a delightful survey of the consequences of the Reformation of Science in four distinct fields. "The Reality of Matter in Motion" deals mainly with Galileo, Kepler, and Newton, and shows the part each played in giving us the principles which lie behind the motions of the planets, or the fall of an apple. In this chapter the author's treatment of Galileo's controversy with the Sacred College is characteristic of his attitude throughout the book, one of tolerance and understanding. While admitting the Church's occasional hostility toward the findings of Science, he shows how she has furthered and encouraged it in many notable instances; and, unlike many a scientist, as dogmatic as any fundamentalist, he refuses to admit any necessary conflict between these two realms of thought.

The chapter entitled "The Reality of Electricity in Motion" gives the reader a bird's-eye view of a totally different realm, in which the electrical and magnetic fluxes are the new realities, as discovered by Oersted, Ampère, and Faraday. This survey is as valuable to the scientifically trained reader as to the layman, for its picturesque presentation of well known laws and concepts throws a revealing light over a region where it is easy to lose sight of the unifying thread which runs through it all.

The same is true of the next chapter which deals with radiation and Maxwell's electro-magnetic theory of light. Pupin's characterization of Maxwell as a "poet by temperament, a keen and enthusiastic natural philosopher, a brilliant mathematician, and a man of deep religious faith" might easily have been written about himself, with the poetic quality especially apparent in his treatment of ether waves. The chapter on "Cosmic Granules" deals with molecules, atoms, and electrons. The granular nature of radiant energy (Planck's quantum theory) and X-rays are also touched on.

It is in the last two chapters and an epilogue that the author develops his thesis of "Creative Coördination," and he does it so clearly and simply that everyone can understand it. In brief, it is a point of view in which the random motion of the components of a chaos (like the molecules of a gas) is pictured as being organized into a cosmos by a coördinating" power acting through the instrumentality of "coördinators." They deal directly with the wholly chaotic activities of the parts, so as to bring order out of chaos. The piston and cylinder of a steam engine are such coördinators acting upon the random motion of steam molecules to produce useful energy, and the inventor is the coördinating power, the "modern Prometheus who had stolen a secret from golden Helios, the sun-god."

From this and similar illustrations, and reasoning by analogy, Pupin postulates "molecules of life" which are coördinated in the microcosm of living cells into creative work under the direction of coördinators which we do not know. A similar coördination takes place in the macrocosm of organic structures like the human body, and finally individual men are granules in the social cosmos, where Church and State are the coördinators acting under the coördinating power of the "Creator, the fountain head of all spiritual realities." Still more transcendental is the idea that such realities as our perceptions of the external world are evidences of the coördinating power of God, who enables us to transform their chaotic stimuli into intelligible consciousness. The analogy which the earlier chapters have prepared us to appreciate is very suggestive, and of great beauty. Analogies are not proofs, but they often point the way which further investigation should follow, and science clothed with poetic insight ought to be the best of guides.

Talks on Criticism

(*Continued from page* 297)

entering upon that discussion, it is important to make clear that no matter how strong the scientific obsession of our critical age, it cannot and will not turn criticism into a science—will not, that is, unless science succeeds in reducing the whole of the human problem to weight and measure, a conclusion which grows less likely year by year. For the curve of modern science seems to stretch toward a reduction of the universe to simple forces remotely and inexplicably caused, which, in infinite complication, make the world. And such parts of this complication as personality, esthetics, the moral values, the philosophy of life, seem likely to require metaphysics or an artistic interpretation in order to become comprehensible. Science will provide new tools for thinking, but the imagination must use them.

However that may be, it is clear that the science of criticism is not yet, and probably never will be, the same as criticism. It is an invaluable aid to the understanding of literature, less valuable in painting and music, but the best it can do is to make the critic ready for the effort of intuition and interpretation where his mind springs ahead of the measurable into what can only be felt and divined. Scientifically we are better able to cope with the nature and causes of Shakespeare's genius than any previous age. We know more of his theatre than any critics since his time, know more of the Renaissance mind and Renaissance history in general terms than he did, know more of the reason for the subtle effects of language, know better the biology and psychology of his characters than any one before us. The facts about Shakespeare are largely now in our possession; but in intuitive perception of the nature of his genius we have not gone ahead of Coleridge. We are better informed than he, but not better critics. Our foundations are broader and sounder, but our findings do not yet evince his imagination. Probably the job of this generation of critics is with foundations, and we should applaud the attempt to get all the science possible into criticism, and get it right. Unfortunately it is often wrong,—but that, as has been said before, is another story.

"Tribute has been paid to the virtues of broadcasting from a rather unexpected quarter," says a British journal. "It has generally been supposed that the extension of listening-in militated against the reading habit, but at the librarians' meeting held recently it was stated that statistics showed the contrary.

"Forty-five out of the eight librarians who answered the questionnaire sent out by an official of the British Broadcasting Company reported a definite increase in the issue of the books which had been the subject of educational talks over the radio."

The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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Maturing America

OUR TIMES: THE UNITED STATES 1900-1925. Volume II America Finding Herself. By MARK SULLIVAN. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1927. $5.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

THE astonishing interest and value of Mr. Sullivan's history of "the average man" in our times rests upon three facts which have not had the appreciation they deserve. These are the fact that no historical era is so vital and significant to most men as that through which they have themselves lived; the fact that the average man is infinitely more affected, at least in the narrow view, by the everyday circumstances of his environment—by popular songs, dime novels, fashions in clothes, slang, changes in his food and his fuel and his recreation—than he is by most wars, political overturns, or grand intellectual movements; and the fact that just as valuable research may be done in the memories of living participants in recent events as in the time-yellowed documents of an age long dead. Mr. Sullivan did not discover these facts, but he has given them a better application than any preceding American writer. Tested by the formal standards of full-dress history, he might be denied the title of historian at all. He could be pronounced a bright journalistic annalist and nothing more. Yet he has brought into American historical writing a current of such originality and freshness that his work is likely to prove more influential than anything else done in years.

The first volume of Mr. Sullivan's history covered—nominally—the period 1900-1903. This second volume covers—nominally—the years 1904-05. Actually it is a curious and fascinating potpourri of matter extending from McGuffey's Readers of the fifties to corset styles of 1927; from calisthenics as Dorothy Canfield Fisher practised it in 1892 to Congressman James W. Wadsworth's opinion in 1907 that Roosevelt was "a faker and a humbug;" and from the petroleum industry in 1865 to the success of the Wright brothers forty years later. The social historian, especially if he loves contrasts, cannot be tied down to a narrow range of years. The roots of this or that tendency may go back for decades: the public attitude toward the League in 1927 may be colored by the treatment of Europe in Quackenbos's school history of 1880, and the significance of buggy sales in 1903 can hardly be measured except against a chart of Ford and Buick sales in 1925. When it is added that Mr. Sullivan is either frankly indifferent about arrangement or quite unable to furnish any logical pattern, that he is most capricious in the space he gives or denies topics, and that he ranges from hairpins to Bernard Shaw, the chaotic wealth of his materials becomes evident.

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Yet, split into segments, the book does reveal a certain fragmentary pattern. The first two hundred pages are an application of the thesis that we cannot understand the minds of adult Americans in 1904 unless we know what they studied, talked about, read, and played at in 1874. Despite its 50,000 words, it is an incomplete application. It takes no account of newspapers, universities, magazines, religious tendencies, Chautauqua, travel, and a dozen other important forces. But so far as it goes—the old readers and geographies, the Delsarte elocution, the sentimental poetry, the songs ranging from "Buffalo Gals" to "Yellow Rose of Texas"—it is fascinating. Then comes a series of chapters upon the integration of industry: Rockefeller, the triumph of the Standard Oil Company, other trusts, Lloyd's "Wealth Against Commonwealth," the first Sherman Act decisions, corporation immunity, and the titanic duel of Hill and Harriman. Partly following this, partly sandwiched into it, is a third series of chapters upon the emergence of Roosevelt, his war with predatory industry, the Northern Securities case, the defeat of Foraker, and the humbling of monopoly. There succeeds a brisk section upon the fight for pure foods and pure drugs. The fifth section is devoted to Langley, the Wright brothers, and the success of the airplane—with twenty pages upon the first newspaper reporting of the Kitty Hawk flights. Finally there comes a brief month-by-month record of picturesque events of 1904-5, beginning with the arrival of James Smithson's body to rest near the Smithsonian Institution, and ending with the installation of the first electric lights for railway trains in a Chicago & Northwestern flier.

Mr. Sullivan's sources are as unpredictable as the table of contents for his next chapter. He has drawn heavily upon newspapers and magazines, and has made considerable use of books of reminiscence. But a fact which gives especial value to his work is the diligence with which he has levied upon the memories of living witnesses. The raw material thus brought together will make his book itself a rich source for future historians. Into the chapters on the formation of the American mind is woven the testimony of apparently dozens of humble citizens, who wrote of schooldays in Pennsylvania, or Iowa, or Maine. The pages on Carnegie have been corrected by James Howard Bridge, an old associate of the steel king who had assisted Carnegie in his literary work. In the chapter on the great anthracite strike of 1902 a dozen important men have had a hand—Elihu Root, James R. Garfield, President Green, Ralph Easley, and Secretary Davis among them. Proof-sheets of the book have been circulated to scores of people, and some of their more pungent comments are included, in Mr. Sullivan's informal way, in the footnotes. It is delightful, in reading the chapter on the Wrights, to find Byron Newton (formerly of the New York *Herald*) illustrating Mr. Sullivan's remark as to the curious intimacy of the brothers by a little anecdote. "There was an amusing side to the plurality or oneness of their brotherly association. When asked to have a drink or cigar, either one would answer, 'No, thank you, we don't drink.'" A little later Mr. Newton is himself corrected in a footnote. He had written of the Kitty Hawk region as swarming with snakes and wild hogs, but Arthur Ruhl informs Mr. Sullivan that there were no snakes, and Mr. Willie Hare denies the existence of the hogs.

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This chapter upon the Wrights and their great achievement is, as a piece of narrative writing, the best part of the book. Mr. Sullivan has been fired by enthusiasm in treating the sudden dramatic appearance of the airplane, as in his first volume he was fired by emotional admiration of Dr. Walter Reed, Dr. Lazear, and their associates in the conquest of yellow fever. Close behind, as examples of swift and well-colored historical composition, come the pages dealing with Roosevelt's expert defeat of Mark Hanna in 1903, and of Senator Foraker a little later; the struggle for the control of the Northern Pacific Railroad, ending in a deadlock between Harriman and Schiff on the one side, Hill and Morgan on the other; and the history of that great crusade for unpoisoned foods which was begun by Upton Sinclair's publication of "The Jungle." These narrative chapters are so good, in fact, that most readers will wish that Mr. Sullivan dealt more with such subjects, and less with that class of materials which demands close analysis to bring out its full value. He can tell a story admirably; he interprets a mass of sociological data rather clumsily.

Careful though Mr. Sullivan is, he has inevitably fallen into a good many errors in presenting so huge a volume of facts concerning a period as yet not treated by many writers. Some of these errors are important; others are trivial. It is hardly fair to say of Wilson, for example, that after his campaign attacks on the New Jersey laws favoring trusts, "he was elected Governor in 1910, but took no step toward repealing the old laws." Wilson's inaugural address to the legislature in 1911 gave prominence to an urgent recommendation for repeal. Mr. Sullivan's interpretation of Roosevelt's first message to Congress as mild and on the whole reassuring to capital is not the interpretation of most historical students. As Mr. Charles Beard has said, it contained practically all the fighting doctrines of progressivism for which Roosevelt stood during his two terms, and later utterances added little that was essentially new to it. Mr. Sullivan states that there was no governmental regulation of freight rates until 1887, and no effective regulation until 1906. On the contrary, there was some very effective State regulation, upheld in the Supreme Court, in the seventies. To speak of science as wholly neglected in not only schools but colleges and universities from 1865 to 1895 is to do an injustice to the genuinely effective and widely-felt work of such men as E. L. Youmans and John Fiske. No explanation of the success of Carnegie in distancing his steel competitors can be satisfactory which completely neglects, as Mr. Sullivan does, Carnegie's great enterprise in using new chemical and technical methods. And one might protest, to mention minor matters, against Mr. Sullivan's treatment of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas as belonging to the eighties, when "Pinafore" arrived with a bang in the seventies; against his treatment of Henry Adams's device of writing an autobiography in the third person as original, when it was very old, and had been employed by Winfield Scott in the sixties; against the photograph of a blazing oil tank of very modern construction as belonging to the sixties. To deal with the omissions would carry one far afield. Is it really right, for example, to write of the trust problem from 1901 to 1905 without once mentioning the "Iowa idea"?

Yet taken as a whole, this is an admirable book; a book which no one will fail to find engrossing from beginning to end, which no one can read without great profit and instruction, and which will be of permanent value to students of the time. It and its predecessor constitute one of the most impressive exhibitions of the scope, the variety, and the irresistible energy of American life yet published. They constitute the fullest presentation we yet have of the amazing changes and the majestic advances of the last generation within our rich and populous republic.

A Spreading Plant

THE COUNTERFEITERS. By ANDRÉ GIDE. Translated by DOROTHY BUSSY. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1927. $3.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

IN the journal which he kept during the composition of his immense novel André Gide has revealed the germ from which the entire book sprang. In the beginning there were two newspaper clippings. The first told of the arrest of a band engaged in passing counterfeit coins. The youth of the members and the extraordinary code revealed in their confession made the affair unusual. The second was a simple but terrible story of suicide. Driven to the act by his schoolmates, a young student blew out his brains in the midst of a class. Details show the horrible *sang froid* and planned cruelty of his comrades. On these bits of juvenile abnormality Gide has built up, with rare firmness of touch and inventive ingenuity, a complicated narrative framework. The process is laid bare in his journal. The result is "The Counterfeiters."

Unlike his earlier stories, which he now refuses to dignify with the name of novels, "The Counterfeiters" is far from stylized, simplified, and reduced for the expression of a single principle. He has been careful to make its form such that all traces of the modern psychological novel shall disappear. Yet it is not realistic, nor does it offer us a cross-section of any particular *milieu*. He has, instead, attempted to dispense with all the unessentials, to fall back on the old idea of the "pure" novel. From his two clippings an immense plant of the imagination has grown, so luxuriant and often so exotic that any summary of it must necessarily be both inadequate and misleading. The book is a sort of demonstration of strength on the novelist's part, a kind of proof that material, a thesis, documentation, psychological correctness, and all the other shibboleths of whatever school are unimportant. What matters (he appears to claim and demonstrate) is the way in which the narrator illuminates his subject, whatever it may be. His knowledge of existence and his ability to set down that knowledge clearly is all that distinguishes even the greatest novelist from the teller of tales without meaning.

The demonstration is almost gratifyingly successful. The fabric of his novel is intricately woven, and at times extremely curious to Anglo-Saxon eyes. Against a background barely indicated, but at moments diabolic and unreal, he presents a series of interlocking episodes, each leading to another, continuing yet renewing the narrative without any slackening of interest. The principal figures are Bernard Profitendieu, his friend Olivier Molinier, and Olivier's uncle, Edouard. Finding that he is not the son of the man he has always supposed to be his father, Bernard leaves his home, confiding only in Olivier. When Olivier goes to meet his uncle at a railway station on the following day, Bernard follows him and picks up the check which Edouard has dropped after leaving his valise in the parcel room. Instead of returning check or luggage to Edouard, Bernard claims the valise, opens it, and finds in it Edouard's journal, from which he learns that Olivier's elder brother, Vincent, has become

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involved in an affair with a married woman, Laura Douviers, who is expecting a child by him. He has lost at roulette the money intended to aid her during the confinement. It is to help Laura, with whom he had once fancied himself in love, that Edouard has returned to France. In a state of romantic frenzy, Bernard rushes off to Laura's hotel, where Edouard turns up in time to catch the thief of his luggage, pardon him, and arrange to take him to Switzerland with Laura, as secretary. There Bernard conceives a passion for Laura, while Edouard talks at length of the novel he hopes to write,—a novel to be called "The Counterfeiters." They meet a Polish boy, Boris, who is recovering from a nervous disease at their sanitarium, and he returns to Paris with them to enter the pension school kept by Laura's father. Meanwhile Olivier has been introduced by Vincent to Count Robert de Passavant, a brilliant and perverted young writer. Vincent has been helped by this personage both financially and in his love affair with Lady Griffith, a typical "femme fatale." He now makes Olivier editor of a magazine he is financing, and takes him to Corsica for the summer. At the pension Bernard is thrown rather unwillingly into the arms of Sarah Vedel, a daughter of the house. All these persons come together at a dinner given by Passavant's review, at which Olivier confesses his disgust for his patron to Edouard, who persuades him to give up the editorship. Bernard returns soon after to his home, much chastened, and Laura goes back to her husband. The book ends with the two episodes founded directly on the clippings,—the counterfeiting affair in which Oliver's younger brother is concerned, and the suicide of Boris.

The character of the book is not always pleasant. The preoccupation with sexual perversion which Gide has shown lately ("Corydon" and "Si le Grain ne Meurt") is here exemplified in the relationship of Passavant and Olivier, and in a more sentimental manner in the affection of Edouard for Olivier. There are traces, too, in the valise incident of an earlier attitude which may seem curious to those unfamiliar with Gide's other books. Indeed, Bernard was originally named Lafcadio,and was to have been the hero of "Les Caves du Vatican" in a later stage of development. It will be remembered that that delightful young man pushed a fellow traveler out of the window of his railway carriage simply because it occurred to him that there could be no possible motive for doing so. The influence of Dostoievsky, to whom Gide has devoted one of his best critical works, is doubtless responsible for these peculiarities of conduct on the part of his heroes.

But matters of derivation and significance aside, what a miraculous growth is this novel of many novels! For from the initial situation spring new situations, the original characters engender new ones, until there is not one, but a whole series of novels within the book. One feels that Gide has stopped this endless multiplication by a sheer effort of will, and not because his imagination is in any way taxed. He is sophisticated without ceasing to be profound, and he is profound without dulness. The task of writing a novel that is modern in the worthiest sense and yet still as clearly a novel as "Tom Jones" has been superbly performed. His tact and skill in construction, the classic quality of his style (for even his enemies will admit that Gide writes French as no one else can at the present time), and the continued intelligence of his observation, combine to make "The Counterfeiters" rich beyond all but the best of twentieth century fiction. Yet it can be read with pleasure for the "story" alone. Perhaps Gide's real triumph is this manifestation of the universal beneath a glittering surface of the particular. More than a happy instinct for expressing emotions, more than the tricks of the trade, have been necessary to achieve this subterranean wealth.

André Gide's reputation in America has so far been of the most deadly sort. Four of his books have been translated; his name is known and will even produce a certain effect if injected abruptly into a literary conversation; but it may be doubted that any save the few whose business it is to read him have really bothered to do so. Now that France and Barrès and Proust are gone there is no one whose word carries greater weight in the province of French prose. He is not a "difficult" writer,—not, for example, half so difficult as Proust. His work is sufficiently varied to afford for almost any reader the discovery of some good thing.

The Bowling Green

The Palette Knife

YOU won't mind if the Green today smells a bit of kerosene and turpentine and linseed oil; because I have just, very reluctantly, cleaned the brushes and put away the paint box and set aside the picture I am working on("Portrait of a Glass of Gin"). It is a fine dark rainy afternoon, just the sort of weather I find excellent for painting. The darkness doesn't bother me at all—most of my painting is done by lamp-light anyhow, quite privily, where no one can see what I'm up to. Perhaps that accounts for the failure of some of my color schemes. Blue, for instance: I never can get my blues clear enough, luminous.

I've kept very quiet about my paintings, haven't I? Yes, I have; and probably I shouldn't have mentioned them at all, ever, but putting away the brushes just now, and the pleasant greasy feeling on my hands, and an unwillingness to focus my thoughts on the League of Nations (which I was going to tell you more of) gave me a sudden impulse to palaver about my Art. Which really is an important division of my secret life. I do my writing on Thursdays and my painting on Sundays. The rest of the time I answer telephone calls. It is fine to have one's program definite.

I find that almost all the writers I know best have a clandestine affection for painting. Writing has its merits, but it does seem—more and more, as you go on—to involve an attempt to think; and it's so devilish intangible. Whereas in painting (my kind of painting anyhow) you rely entirely on instinct and all the merrier moods of the psyche. Also a newly-finished painting smells so good; and you have to wash your hands frequently.

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It began very innocently—oh, a long time ago—when my itinerary used to take me past the well-known store of Messrs. Devoe and Raynolds on Fulton Street; if there is any more alluring place in New York I don't know it. I had often bought water-color boxes there, and crayons, and then one day I went in, and pretending I was getting it for my small boy, I bought a box of oil painting materials. I set to work immediately to make a portrait of the Brooklyn Bridge, but after a few hours' work I concluded it was impossible. Very likely I would have said so publicly, but about that time my friend Mr. Heywood Broun began to write about *his* paintings. We were both newspaper columnists in those days and there is an unwritten etiquette in the columnist profession that you "lay off" topics that other columnists have made their own. Therefore, for all these years, Art had to get along without the benefit of my comments or the narrative of my private humiliations.

Mr. Broun, I don't doubt, has made much greater progress than I, because his pleasant candor about his experiments probably brought him many valuable suggestions from practised painters. My work in oils has suffered from excessive secrecy, for I was even too bashful ever to find out what the little bottles were for. One was marked Rectified Turpentine, and one Pale Drying Oil. The turpentine, I supposed, was to clean the brushes with; but what about the Pale Drying Oil? I supposed it was to mix with the paints, but evidently I was too zealous: all my early work had a sort of greasy penumbra around the edges. When the Pale Drying Oil provided by Devoe and Raynolds was used up, I found a bottle of linseed oil in the family medicine cupboard, and this seemed to do fairly well. I have also experimented with Three-in-One oil, olive oil, and one evening, when a sudden urge to paint came upon me and I could find no other vehicle, melted butter. So do all artists, I suppose, relish the backward gaze upon their early struggles. The whole problem of how oil paints are mixed and proper conduct of the implements is still a mystery to me. Once I saw a man painting a landscape down by the Mill Pond in Roslyn; I was strongly tempted to go and watch him, but knowing how alarmed *I* would be to be watched, I refrained. Yet I always had a feeling that I could do it all right—if I knew what to do.

So, for years, I made little attempt to live up to whatever hopes Devoe and Raynolds might have formed. I confined myself to pencil and crayons. Then, in the excellent way things happen, a random chance sent me back to my true ambition. Taking tea one afternoon this summer with the admirable Mr. Hamish Miles, whom I do not scruple to mention as he is a contributor, though not often enough, to this journal, we had admired with full sincerity the many enchanting objects of art in his house beside Hampstead Heath. It was there, in Pond Street, N. W. 3 (as a matter of fact Katherine Mansfield once lived in the same house, and one of the finest toy shops you ever saw is almost opposite) that a great moment occurred. Mr. Miles, with an air of epiphany, showed me two very modernist pictures in colored chalk, framed in the hall. "Guess what those are," he said. My first notion was that they were Gauguin, or at least Jerome Blum or Marsden Hartley. Certainly they were stunning things, enchantingly decorative, humorous, and full of suggestion. And we learned that Mrs. Miles had bought them from a pavement artist somewhere in Kensington.

This did a great deal to encourage me. Certainly Mr. Miles did not suspect it, but my inward thought, with due obeisance to the unknown artist in Kensington, was that I also had pictures in my soul which I need not be ashamed to attempt. So, returning home, I took up again my brushes and tubes, and bought a fresh bottle of linseed oil. I had another look at my "Autobiography of a Chrysanthemum" (one in a very early manner), my "What a Dog Thinks About at Night." But it was in working on the picture entitled "The Birth of a Pun" that I made a great discovery—the use of the palette knife.

Perhaps I ought to describe this work, to give you some notion of my ideas of symbolism in paint. A pun, obviously, is a head-on collision between two different meanings. So the first thing you see is two broad bands of color running diagonally across the picture and meeting in a white space in the middle. (The white space symbolizes a blank mind.) These bands of color show gradations of tone, for all meanings have their different shades. One band varies among orange and red, the other in tones of blue. But a pun involves a victory of one meaning over the other: so within the white area is a jagged vibration of red and yellow, rather feverish or scorbutic in effect, with peripheral striations suggesting tension. Within this again is a zigzag golden spark, the Pun itself—though not golden enough; it is too muddy. The artist, working in excitement, did not properly clean his brushes; besides, the colors *will* get mixed up on the palette.

The lower right hand area shows a rather dun and opaque territory where an assortment of mushrooms, fungi, and livid blooms is tenderly speckled. These are flowers of speech. The upper left hand region looks like a violent electrical downpour. From rolling masses of blue and black cloud discharge parallel rods of rain and stripes of lightning, directed toward the dangerous center where the pun is nucleolating. This all represents a brainstorm. And the Pun itself not having been a success, it drops rapidly down a heavy black chute which leads swiftly to the bottom of the picture.

But what I was going to say was—in dealing with the delicate problem of depicting the brain-storm (upper left corner) I was in despair until I suddenly thought of the palette knife, for which I had never had any use. I found that by splaying this about among nice thick paint the most gorgeous effects could be produced. In a later picture, "November Wind," which shows some almost bare trees in an autumn dusk and gale, I discovered that the flock of flying leaves that looked so flat and paltry when done with a brush could be nipped in with the knife blade to grand effect. And what I've been pondering ever since is, why isn't there something in a writer's kit that could correspond to the Palette Knife? Some nifty little dodge that could scatter life and dexterity into the meagre cadence of one's copy.

I haven't at all done justice to my ardors as a prentice painter—but I am too eager to get back to the "Portrait of a Glass of Gin." I intended to use, in that, some of the gold radiator-paint that gave such fine bronzy wash to the southeast corner of the "Autobiography of a Chrysanthemum." Yet I have an uneasy feeling that a merely technical trick, if once successful, should never be repeated. But if any one knows of anything, in the realm of writing, that corresponds to the palette knife . . .

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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Books for Girls

By Elizabeth W. Morris

ALMOST all fishermen have honest moments, and if you catch them in one of these they will admit that their array of flies and "spinners" and other lures are invented, bought, cherished, and used more to please the fishermen than to please the fish. What the fish want is real, honest-to-goodness worms, crickets, helgramites, and crawfish. Let us grant ourselves an honest moment, and admit that "books for girls" are, for the most part, invented, bought, and read, if read they are, more to please the mothers than the girls.

Easy reading—guaranteed "wholesome," guaranteed "sweet, simple, and girlish" (how the girls loathe that phrase!), guaranteed not to contain anything a girl cannot at a glance understand, not to contain a real love-affair, though one may be discreetly suggested as likely to occur just beyond the back cover of the book, guaranteed not to arouse pity or terror or questioning—in short, not to contain any of the elements that this dangerous thing called life is chiefly made up of—safe books, so written that mothers, looking for the "right thing for my daughter," can feel perfectly at ease.

The situation is naively given away by a notice on the gay paper cover of one of these "girls' books." It is printed across one corner and it reads: "For girls 8 to 15. *Tear this off before giving this book to a child.*"

There we have it! In other words, don't let the girl know she is pigeonholed, let her suppose you think of her, not as a "girl of eight to fifteen," but as a real person, a human being, herself. Does she not know? Is she cheated? We hope not, but we suppose by careful management her hunger for reality may be staved off for a few years—years in which she ought to be getting ready to meet the rest of reality, such of it as has not already turned up inside her own breast. Can we wonder that at sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, our girls plunge for themselves? They are out to know "life;" they are out to get thrills, and they get them.

It is hard to say just what the difference is between a real book and these books-for-girls. One is reminded of the difference between trees in town and trees in the woods. We first cut down all the trees to make a nice town, and then, missing something, we remember about trees, and plant some, in rows, carefully. So with our girls—we clean up and sterilize their environment, so far as we can, and then plant out in it such experiences as we think they should have. Now, of course, nothing first-rate was ever written with the motive of doing good to somebody else (that is the trouble with most sermons) so the writers of "juveniles" are handicapped from the start. Moreover, you cannot write a real book unless you are a real person, writing for real persons. And you will hardly catch real persons writing books to be sold to mothers-of-girls-from-eight-to-fifteen—even if the labels are to be torn off before the volumes reach their readers.

Illustration from "Tewa Firelight Tales" (Longmans, Green).

See page 305

There is no great harm in these books. But when one thinks of the great books, and even of the good books, that our girls and boys will never have time to read, and then sees these piles and piles of books—flimsy pseudo-literature—being unloaded across the counters, it tests one's optimism. Our girls will read a dozen stories, all run in the same mould, about boarding-school and camp, and they will never have time to read John Muir's story of his boyhood, or Anna Shaw's story of her girlhood, or Aksakov's—but we are here today to think about books for girls!

Here, then, are ten new books, just "released" upon a waiting world of mothers. Three[1] are about boarding-school or camp. Two[2] are about the recovering of wealthy uncles, lost through accident or villany, and badly needed by poor but charming nieces and nephews. Three,[3] and these among the best, have a thread of honest adventure against a saving background of history: Hartford of the "Charter Oak" period, Texas frontier garrison life fifty years ago, Gettysburg during its great battle.

One[4] is a readable story about five rather attractive and almost real children, suddenly orphaned, who ran away in their flivver and found a new home for themselves. And one,[5] the best, is about a girl who wanted to "write," and did, in spite of the opposition of her family, her village, and her lover. But the tangled love affairs of this story would throw it out of the eight to fifteen class—a good book for even an eighteen-year-old to read, if there were not so many great books unread.

This is the heart of the trouble—not that the books are bad, but that they get in the way of their betters. And behind the situation is—over-production, and the consequent need to find new markets. Each publisher wants to put out the best girls' book of the year. Can we blame him? Each secures the best to be found, dresses it out as attractively as possible, and uses every known trick to make it "go over big." Can we blame him?

We blame no one, but protective measures ought to be instituted in behalf of our young people, for whom the world's best literature is not too good, while the time in which to read it is all too brief.

[1]Carol of Highland Camp, by Earl Reed Silvers. D. Appleton and Co. $1.75.

[1]Raquel of the Ranch Country, Alida Sims Malkus. Harcourt, Brace and Co. $2.00.

[1]Soapsuds' Last Year, by Ethel Comstock Bridgman. Century Co. $1.75.

[2]The Real Reward, by Christine Whiting Parmenter. Little, Brown and Co. $2.00.

[2]Storey Manor, a Mystery, by Ethel Cook Eliot. Doubleday, Page and Co. $2.00.

[3]Civilizing Cricket, by Forrestine C. Hooker. Doubleday, Page and Co. $2.00.

[3]The Regicide's Children, by Aldine Havard. Charles Scribners Sons. $1.00.

[3]Sewing Susie, by Elsie Singmaster. Houghton Mifflin. $1.50.

[4]The Harrison Children, by Otto M. and Mabel S. Becker. Doubleday, Page and Co. $1.75.

[5]Emily's Quest, by L. M. Montgomery. Frederick A. Stokes. $2.00.

IT is easy and usual to describe the genus "children's book" by saying that it is a book for children. But would we say, "This is a book for grown-ups"? Which grown-ups? What sort of grown-ups? No! The adult world with its million types and tastes offers a sufficiently wide choice, but choose his audience the author of a book for grown-ups must first and foremost. Obviously he cannot please all in such a rich diversity, nor will the term "for grown ups" lead him to his friends or later his friends to him—it carries no further than its own generalization. It would seem that the parallel phrase "for children" might also require specification before its usefulness begins. But such, apparently, is not the case. It serves only too well as it stands.

This is probably because the juvenile world, unlike the case-hardened world of maturity, will simplify under our hands, and authors, being human, do not resist the temptation of the easy way. It is not at all hard to simplify writing about child-life merely by negativing the grown up situation. Drop out the manifold branchings of adult activity—children are not doctors, lawyers, merchants, chiefs—and the problem of special knowledge drops out for the author. A few simple affairs of home and school fill youthful days, and again it is easy to find suitable material for children's stories on a negative principle—don't write about death or the devil. Differences in the children themselves need not trouble. Indeed, by disclaiming responsibility for such childish subtleties as parents and educators fall heir to, there are very few lines of differentiation that the author must observe. The word "children" firmly in mind—we all know what we mean by "children"—the rest is not difficult. It is a good take-off for any writer.

There are, of course, a few handles to pick the word up by. "For children" presupposes simple divisions on lines of age and sex. Immediately we have the boy's book, which often tells about the things boys do not do nowadays or more usually recounts what every boy does, and the girl's book, which prettily domesticates adventure in home and boarding-school. For younger children we have the magic-story, presenting magic as "anything impossible," a definition much more accessible than the stirring of the imagination anciently involved in the word, or else we have the everyday story, once more about what every child does, so that the youngster can have the pleasure of meeting old friends in not too new places. All kinds of stories are certainly "for children." *They are not* almost everything that a grown up book might be.

It is only when we shift to the child's own point of view that our efficient author's generalization falls to the ground. Between its letters suddenly appear all the infinite particularities of a world that varies in its own ways immeasurably more that the grown-ups', a world whose simplicity, like nature's, is not so simple as it seems. And the writer who lightly tries to find an audience here is indeed a rash being. Or, to put it differently, perhaps only those who try lightly, because of some remnant of joy in their otherwise oppressed breasts, are not rash.

Fairy Tales

A BOOK OF PRINCESS STORIES. By Kathleen Adams and Frances Elizabeth Atchinson. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1927. $2.50.

FAIRY tales and legends seem to be the natural food for children, as inevitable and necessary as milk. Juggle your vitamines and calories as you will, milk remains the complete food. And so, if everything but stories of fairies and of magic were taken from a child's literary diet, something of everything that is essential would be left.

Therefore, we can greet with pleasure another well-thought-out collection called "A Book of Princess Stories," by Kathleen Adams and Frances Elizabeth Atchinson, charmingly illustrated by Lois Lenski. Each tale has a heading and finial in line-drawing suggestive of the story and full of quaintness and humor. Then, there are four full-page color illustrations which are done with a happy disregard of perspective (an unnecessary elaboration from a child's point of view) and quite in the spirit of old tapestries. Here the sun peeps over the horizon on the same plane with the much simplified Princess in the foreground; while between them lambs gambol, flowers bloom, and castles raise their turrets with a decorative dismissal of realism.

The stories are well chosen and range from a stark little folk-tale called "Gold Tree and Silver Tree," which is derived from the Celtic ("Celtic Fairy Tales," by Joseph C. Jacobs) to Rose Fyleman's "The Princess Who Could Not Cry" with its background of humor and good sense. George MacDonold gives some very knowing explanations of fairy lore in the "Princess Day-Light" and quite clears up the fatal question of fairy god-mothers in general and wicked ones in particular.

One is curious to know where the "Princess Carpillon" was found. To judge from its stately artificiality of tone and the descriptions of high-born shepherds moralizing in lovely glades, it might be seventeenth century French, but there is no reference to the source of the story whatsoever.

It is too bad that Miss Adams and Miss Atchinson did not choose to be clearer in the matter of sources. In the preface, to be sure, there is an incomplete list of titles and authors, though in some cases one is referred to another collector of tales such as Andrew Lang or Howard Pyle. To salute the creator of a story as one reads it, is a mere matter of courtesy and it would seem desirable to make such an act of acknowledgment easy for the reader.

Boys and Books

By Samuel Scoville, Jr.

He who learns to read books escapes the vermin of life and adds eternity to time. He communes with the mighty dead and gains a host of friends, wise and brave, with whom he can counsel and on whom he can call.

SO wrote old Seneca from the blood and mud of Nero's court. One likes to believe that he found some solace in his beloved books in that den of wild beasts before he fell a victim to their ferocity.

One of the outstanding problems of parents today is how to teach their children to acquire this habit of reading books. In these days of movies and magazines when what used to be taboo is now tabloid, many of our young people never do read in the true sense and their minds, so far as literature goes, are only a clutter of newspapers and periodicals.

Some time ago through the American

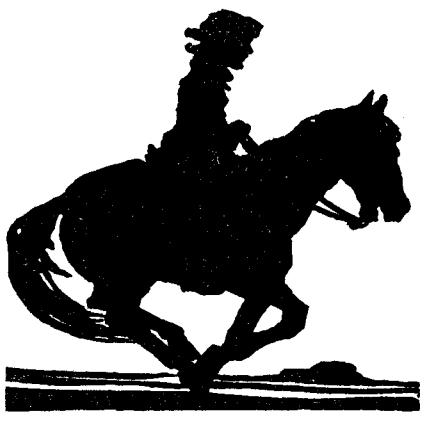

Illustration from "Civilizing Cricket" (Doubleday Page).

Library Association a questionnaire of some thirty-six thousand children was taken in an attempt to find out what books the children of today will read. The answers received were significant, even if discouraging to some of the more serious minded of the librarians. Such a delightful children's book—by adult standards—as Kenneth Grahame's "The Wind in the Willows" had practically no appeal to any of the thirty-six thousand. Nine hundred of them liked a series unanimously voted by the librarians to be trash. One boy from Iowa gave a revealing answer when he wrote about one of these banned volumes:

"I like this book because it suits my taste. I have a wild taste."

Another boy wrote about "East of the Sun and West of the Moon," "I like this book because it is easy to understand what it means. There are no words that will stop you reading. I like books of that sort."

A young misogynist wrote of the "Courtship of Miles Standish": "I like it because it was about a brave man who was afraid to ask a lady to marry him."

Still another youthful cynic, writing of "Evangeline" said: "It doesn't seem possible that a girl would walk so many miles for her beau when now a girl wouldn't walk one mile to see him."

One of my own children once summed up the situation so far as she was concerned by telling me that she liked "talky" books. Whenever she essayed a new book she looked to see whether it contained a sufficient quantity of dialogue. If the pages were unrelieved by numerous quotation marks she fared farther.

Scores of worthless books are read to pieces and by boys who care nothing for the "Last of the Mohicans," "Captains Courageous," "Hans Brinker," "The Talisman," "Puck of Pook's Hill," or similar masterpieces, according to adult standards. "Why?" is the question of exasperated and conscientious teachers, librarians, and parents.

After many years of writing books for boys and trying to persuade said boys to read them; of having charge of the reading of boy scouts and of numerous boys' clubs, besides four boys of my own, I have arrived at a number of general conclusions outside of those stated above by the boys themselves. In the first place boys' tastes are very much like those to which Thackeray confessed: "I write novels for other people but the books which I like to read myself are those without love or any of that sort of nonsense, but full of fighting, escapes, robbery, and rescue."

Again, a book that a boy will read must march, or better yet, gallop. Let it halt if only for a few times and it has lost a boy-reader.

Lastly, nearly all boys like animal stories. Accordingly, experimenting through a number of years with all kinds of boys, I have finally worked out a first-aid list of ten

(*Continued on next page*)

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The Children's Bookshop

(*Continued from preceding page*)

books with one of which I have always been able to catch the attention of any boy except one who belongs to that hopeless residuum who will go to their graves guided only by the Sunday newspapers.

None of the books in this list are worthless, although some of them do not rank high from a literary standpoint, noticeably one of my own, which I tried out because it appeals to that love of woodcraft and out-of-door adventure which a considerable percentage of boys have. The way to get boys to read books is to begin. Once started, and the standard of reading can be steadily raised. Undoubtedly, many better lists can be prepared. I offer this one only because in my experience it has worked with most boys from twelve to sixteen years old.

The list is as follows: "The White Company," by Conan Doyle, "The Black Arrow," by Stevenson, "Seventeen," by Booth Tarkington, "The Jungle Book," by Kipling, "The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood," by Howard Pyle, "Mysterious Island," by Jules Verne, "The Three Musketeers," by Dumas, "Boy Scouts in the Wilderness," by Samuel Scoville, Jr., "The Call of the Wild," by Jack London, and last and by no means least, "Careers of Danger and Daring," by Cleveland Moffatt.

"The White Company" is Doyle's best book. To write it he tore the very bowels out of Froissart as he once said about it. It is full of the rescues, robberies, and escapes that boys like and is written by a master of his craft. If a boy likes that then comes "Ivanhoe," the second best historical novel in the English language. If once he falls under the spell of that book he is saved. All of Scott stretches away before him. Oh, to read those magic volumes again for the first time! Then at the last I try him with the greatest historical novel in any language, "The Cloister and the Hearth." That desperate fight with the robber-band at the inn, the escape from the wind-mill, the duel to the death with the bear—let the boy-reader sample one of those and he will read the whole book and is a reader for life.

"The Black Arrow" leads, of course, to "Treasure Island" and the "Master of Ballantræ," both of which are too strong meat for the average boy. "Robin Hood" is always popular. "The Call of the Wild" is one of the best of our modern animal stories, "Seventeen" catches the boy who a generation ago liked "Tom Sawyer." "The Three Musketeers," helped by the movie, often now appeals to boys. Lastly, for tactile minds, for boys who care more for motor cars and machinery than they do for books and reading, try Cleveland Moffatt's "Careers of Danger and Daring," stories of steeple-jacks, firemen, riggers, balloonists, wild animal trainers—a library in itself.

Informational Books

By Leila V. Stott

"TEXT books are no good, they skip all the interesting parts." This verdict of a twelve-year-old boy in the City and Country School expresses, I believe, a universal objection on the part of children to condensed information. What they enjoy are books rich in the kind of detail that adds vivid human interest to a story. The original narratives of explorers are good instances of this kind of writing. Henry Hudson's red cloak, described by the mate of the *Half Moon,* Columbus's diary notes of the weather on his first trip across the Atlantic, Father Jogues's story of his escape from the Mohawks, details like these we find capturing the imagination of eight and nine-year-old children sufficiently to reappear in their spontaneous dramatic play.

Most children need to be introduced to material of this kind by having parts read aloud to them. Indeed there are unlimited possibilities to such a use of all kinds of books written directly for grown-ups, books of travel, history, biography, science, and even novels, from which extracts can often be chosen to vivify the feeling of a specific environment or period. The very successful science teacher in our school replied the other day to an inquiry about science books for children, that the best ones he knew of were those written for grown-ups. His objection to most of the books written for children was what he described as a tone of "Come little children and let us unfold to you the wonders of the universe." But his laboratory was full of girls and boys from ten to thirteen, lingering after school hours to hear him read aloud from De Kruif's "Microbe Hunters."

In the same way younger children are held year after year by a simple description of life in a lumber camp in which the important factors seem to be what the men eat for breakfast, how they dress, and what time they get up in the morning. No story whatever in the ordinary sense is needed to lend dramatic interest to these simple facts vividly described.

In comparison with books like these the informational story in which conversations are carried on primarily to convey information, inevitably fails. But this is by no means to rule out all stories with informational content. A good story written primarily *as a story* against a background of history, geography, or industry fills so great a need in our school experience that our constant search is for more and more real literature of this kind. What we need in endless quantity are books that will do for all ages of children, what is done for older ones and adults by such modern novels as Hémon's "Maria Chapdelaine" or Donn Byrne's "Marco Polo," and by the great historical fiction and drama and poetry of all time.

See page 311 for brief reviews of informational books.

Children of Other Lands

CHILDREN OF THE MOOR. By Laura Fitinghoff. Translated from the Swedish by Siri Andrews. With Illustrations by Gustav Tenggren. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1927. $2.50.

BIBI: A LITTLE DANISH GIRL. By Karin Michaelis. Translated by Lida Siboni Hanson. Illustrations by Hedvig Collin and Bibi. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1927. $2.50.

THE ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO. By Carlo Lorenzini. Translated by May M. Sweet. With illustrations by Herman I. Bacharach. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1927. $2.

THE MYSTERY OF CASTLE PIERREFITTE. By Eugenie Foa. Translated by Amena Pendleton. Illustrated by Frank Dobias. New York: Longmans, Green Co. 1927. $2.

THE MERRY PILGRIMAGE. Translated by Merriam Sherwood. Illustrated by J. Erwin Porter. New York: The Macmillan Co. The Little Library. 1927. $1.

LITTLE JACK RABBIT. By Alice Dussauze. Translated by Alan Macdougall. Illustrated by Anne Merriman Peck. New York: The Macmillan Co. The Little Library. 1927. $1.

NIMBLE-LEGS. By Luigi Capuana. Translated by Frederic Taber Cooper. Illustrated by I. B. Hazleton. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1927. $1.50.

THE PRINCESS WHO GREW. By P. J. Cohen de Vries. Translated from the Dutch by L. Snitslaar. Illustrated by Rie Cramer. New York: Frederick A. Stokes. 1927. $1.50.

Reviewed by Margery Williams Bianco

TRANSLATIONS fill an important place in a child's reading. They provide his first means of contact with life and environment other than his own. However informative a story may be dealing with another race or country it can never convey the actual spirit of that country as does the book that is a direct product of it; the view is always from the outside. This does not apply so much to the imaginative tale which is more or less universal and relies on no particular background, as to the realistic tale, but even here there is marked difference in the trend that fantasy will take; "Pinocchio" is as inherently Italian in conception as "Alice" is English. Where the story is one dealing realistically with the life of the country the interest is more vital, the field of experience widened, and the whole picture clarified by the sense of personal contact. How far that contact is induced will depend upon the writer and to a great extent upon the translator also, who can do much in bringing about a direct understanding. The happiest translation is naturally that in which the consciousness of the translator as a medium is most nearly lost.

Of this type of story "Children of the Moor," translated by Siri Andrews from the Swedish of Laura Fitinghoff is an excellent example. Here the contact is naturally and immediately established, not only through the simplicity of the story itself and the language in which it is told but also by that curiously direct and intimate atmosphere which seems a characteristic of

"The Ten Princes is perhaps the finest of the Indian novels. . . . one of the most celebrated Hindu romances."

THE TEN PRINCES

Translated form the Sanskrit

By Arthur W. Ryder

W. Norman Brown has this to say and a great deal more in the New York Herald Tribune *Books*: "The adventures are erotic, picaresque, romantic, yet withal valorous and refined. . . . It is a book of irony written by one who saw life as a somewhat mad but amusing spectacle. . . ."

The Boston Transcript, incautiously admitting that "there may be a few readers shocked by portions of the book," is enthusiastic: *"The Ten Princes* is amusing, exciting, and new in style and language."

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Swedish literature. This tale, a classic in Sweden and already widely translated in other countries, is one of those rare books that may be likened, as Miss Hunt says in her introduction, to a spring of water in a thirsty land; it would be difficult certainly to find any book which at all compares with it. The scene is laid during a famine year in Sweden when a group of five little brothers and sisters, faced by starvation in their small mountain village, set out southward alone to beg their way through the settlements. Here in almost any other country would be an irresistible motive for sentimental appeal, but there is not a line of sentimentality in the entire book. I can think of no scene in fiction which parallels the dignity of that moment when the tiny band—the eldest only ten—arrive at a cottage after their first day of hardship, half-frozen, frightened, and weak from exhaustion, and stand there silently inside the door, waiting and hoping to be offered shelter. It is the story of a tribal family in miniature, banded together bravely against misfortune, but still children in all their thoughts, reactions, and uncertainties. Day by day we follow their adventures, their meetings with hostility or with kindness; one is adopted here, another there; little by little all are provided for and the story ends. Here is an epic of childhood that stands alone in its depiction of courage, affection, childish philosophy, and wisdom of life.

From Denmark comes "Bibi" by Karin Michaelis, a story in a different and gayer vein, but where again character and scene are so intimately drawn that the little Danish girl seems a real and personal friend. Author, artist, and translator have combined most happily to make a quite irresistible book. Bibi is the daughter of a country station-master; she is free to travel on the railroads and she goes, whenever and wherever impulse takes her. With a few cents for emergency she periodically runs away, alights at whatever station may take her fancy and makes friends with whoever she meets, from noble to cattle-drover. The illustrated letters she writes home are the most delightful part of the book and full of humor. "Bibi" will enthrall any child of an adventurous tendency and older readers as well; it is one of the funniest books I have read in a long while and very spontaneous. Children who follow the little runaway on her vagabond trips will have a picture of Denmark, the towns, the people, the ways and customs, such as they would not get from a dozen travel-books or more sober and deliberately planned stories.

Among French children Eugénie Foa's tales have been famous for many generations. "The Mystery of Castle Pierrefitte," translated by Amena Pendleton, is a typical romance of mystery which has for setting a village in the Pyrenees at the close of the eighteenth century. Like all her stories it has a dramatic interest and element of suspense which will offset, for present day young readers the old fashioned form of the tale. "The Princess Who Grew," a fairy tale not without its moral lesson, comes from Holland through the translation of L. Snitlaar. This had a considerable success in the original; it is one of those tales which seem independent of any particular country or origin, a pretty little fantasy uncolored by actual background. Rie Cramer's illustrations are delicate in imagination and decorative form.

Among Italian translations there is a new edition of "Pinocchio," by May M. Sweet. Here is an old friend in new and very attractive guise, a production altogether worthy of the Riverside Press. Some children may still prefer the earlier pictures they first learned to associate with this beloved classic, but the new illustrations are marvelous in their color and interpretive spirit, a real artist's reaction to the magic of the book. "Nimble-Legs," by Luigi Capuana, who was one of the most popular writers for children in Italy, is the story of a little Sicilian peasant boy who ran away from home to follow Garibaldi's army. It gives a very vivid picture of Sicilian village life in those early days of ferment, and the author was happily content not to make a sentimental little hero of his chief character. The story of Nimble-Legs's war experience and how he won his medal without knowing it is very amusing. This is an excellent story and the translator has presented it in all its original color and character.

The Little Library, so often to be thanked for stories and translations not otherwise accessible, includes among its new volumes "The Merry Pilgrimage," an adaptation of the old French "Pelerinage de Charlemagne," a very welcome addition to the scarce collection of early French literature available for children's reading. The tale, based on the old poem, has been excellently translated and adapted by Merriam Sherwood, with a chapter giving a picture of Fair-Day in old Paris. For younger readers there comes in the same series "Little Jack Rabbit," by Alice Dussauze, translated by Alan Ross Macdougall, a pretty little story of a family of rabbits in a rabbit warren. Simply told and full of the feeling of the French countryside, this is just the book for a small child who loves real animal stories without too much "make-up" about them. The illustrations deserve special commendation for their character, truthfulness, and real understanding of what a child likes.

A list of earlier books of the same character will be found on page 309.

Folk Tales

CANUTE WHISTLEWINKS. By ZACHARIAS TOPELIUS. Translated by C. W. FOSS. Illustrated by FRANK MCINTOSH. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1927. $2.50.

TEWA FIRELIGHT TALES. Retold by AHLEE JAMES. With illustrations by AWA TSIREH and other Indian artists. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1927. $2.50.

THE MAGIC TOOTH and Other Tales from the Amazon. By ELSIE SPICER EELLS. With illustrations by FLORENCE CHOATE and ELIZABETH CURTIS. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1927. $2.50.

WONDER TALES FROM PIRATE ISLES. By FRANCES JENKINS OLCOTT. Illustrated by HERMAN ROSSE. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1927. $2.

THE PALE MOUNTAINS. By CARL FELIX WOLFF. Translated by FRANCESCA LA MONTE. Illustrated by ANNE MERRIMAN PECK. New York: Minton, Balch & Company. 1927. $2.50.

THE WIND THAT WOULDN'T BLOW. By ARTHUR BOWIE CHRISMAN. With silhouette decorations cut by ELSE HASSELRIIS. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by HELEN CADY FORBES

SINCE the days when the Brothers Grimm began their great work of popularizing folklore the general public has become familiar with the legends of many lands. Out of the researches of scholars and a diligent turning-over of piles of dusty pamphlets there have been made innumerable books, for the idea that children like folklore is firmly implanted, and so they do, when it is interesting. Each Christmas brings a full measure of new collections but the translators and compilers who hold the old tales sacred and unalterable are the ones who make them fascinating. It is not easy to carry from one language to another the distinctive flavor of primitive ideals and moral teachings that has been mixed with humor and a certain raciness of plot to compose the folklore of an ancient people, and to be successful there must be a translation of the spirit no less than the words.

"Canute Whistlewinks" is a delightful book, its stories continuing the line of northern folk tales that have come to us through Grimm and Asbjornsen and the others. This is a translation from the work of the novelist Topelius who prepared the tales for the children of Finland. Some of them we have heard already, The Birch and The Star, for instance, but everybody does not know that story of how a boy and girl found their way home after ten years by their memory of the star that shone at twilight through the leaves of the birch tree by the door. Families who like to read fairy tales aloud will find enjoyment for both reader and listeners in the story of the Raspberry Worm who was really the Raspberry King, and in little deaf Pavo who heard the silent speak, for in "Canute Whistlewinks" there is humor and a fresh touch that makes even a version of the grumbling wife who kept wishing for more and more riches seem unhackneyed. The illustrations and decorations are interesting and the book is altogether satisfactory.

"Tewa Firelight Tales" is a collection of legends from the pueblo of San Ildefonso, told to the author by the Indians, and illustrated by the Indians themselves. It is a serious work, sincerely undertaken. Most of the stories are short and rendered into simple English well adapted for conveying

(*Continued on next page*)

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(*Continued from page* 305)

the atmosphere of the primitive but dramatic legends.

In "The Magic Tooth" Elsie Spicer Eells shows again that she knows how to retell stories from the folklore of Brazil, retaining the effect of an exotic setting but at the same time making the stories clear and understandable, even though the readers may be young. She has a gift for scattering a few unfamiliar names of persons and things and places without cluttering the page with foreign words. That is one of the reasons why children enjoy her books of South American folk tales. She tells a good story, too, obtained at first hand, another reason for the feeling of freshness and simplicity that her work gives.

As time goes by the compilers are forced farther afield for material until a list of the season's crop is like the chapter headings of a geographical reader. But novelty does not necessarily create a lasting interest. "Wonder Tales from Pirate Isles" is another of the collections of legends and old stories that for many years the author has been gleaning from printed sources. These come from various studies of the religion, folklore, and customs of the Dutch East Indies and in connection with them the pirates exist only as a convenient mouthpiece, wholly extraneous.

It is the sub-title, "Folk Tales from the Dolomites" that will call attention to "The Pale Mountains," but lovers of the Tyrol will get most of their satisfaction from reading between the lines and from seeing again the names of places they have visited. Cortina, Monte Cristello, the Rosengarten, Canazei, and many others are there but the legends of that strange, exciting country do not seem as interesting as they ought to be, in spite of what seems a worthy translation. The stories are long and involved, beyond the easy comprehension of most children at the age when they enjoy fairy tales.

"The Wind that Wouldn't Blow" is entirely different from the other books on the list. It is frankly sophisticated, a dozen stories in a Chinese setting for older boys and girls. Exactly how Chinese they are is a question, but they sound Chinese-y, which is the important thing. The absurd story of The Telltale Chalk, so amusing, so plausible, the fatalism of The Shen of Colored Cords, give a more vivid impression of the East, as we imagine it to be, than the same number of pages of description. Most of the stories are not up to the level of Mr. Chrisman's "Shen of the Sea" but the whole effect of the book is original and charming, largely due to the silhouettes by the Danish artist, Else Hasselriis.

A list of other good folk tales will be found on page 309.

A Medley

SAILS OF GOLD. Edited by LADY CYNTHIA ASQUITH. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by BARBARA NEWHALL FOLLETT
Author of "The House Without Windows"

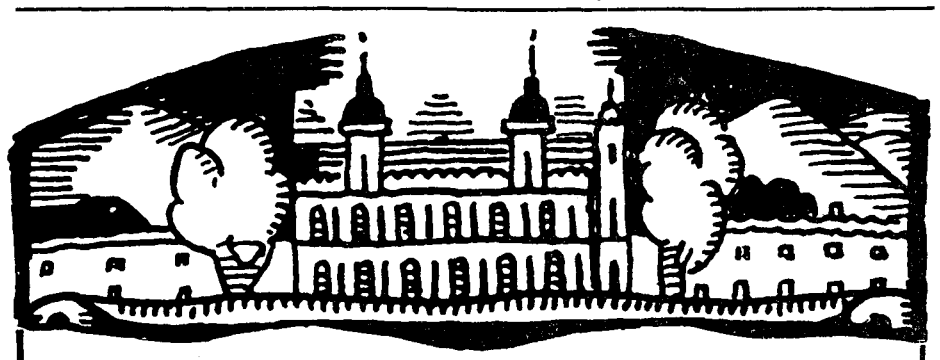
"SAILS OF GOLD!" One imagines a ship under full sail to her moonraker dashing proudly through the waves, leaving her wake of foam behind her, and cleaving the seas with her cutwater. One sees her sweeping into the path of the sun, where her sails look like golden wings; and one sees foam along her sides, swirling and racing away in two long mountain-ranges of snow-capped peaks. As a book, one thinks of sea-stories, full of the sound of the wind and waves, and the sparkling of pirate treasure.

But there is not one story in this collection, "Sails of Gold," that touches upon the sea; there is not even the echo of it that you hear within a great sea-shell. A strange and sudden shock! From the ideas with which the title fills your imagination, you turn to a totally different world. "Sails of Gold" sets you up for something wonderfully adventurous, full of the sea; but, on reading, you find almost every type of story that you can imagine—except stories of the sea.

Then why was it that the editor of this volume called her work "Sails of Gold"? Perhaps it was in honor of the authors, artists, and poets who built it up, sail above sail, into a majestic full-rigged ship. A beautiful idea, to be sure—but it is not a *ship* which they build up!

But, after all, the title is not the most important thing. After you have let your ideas of wild adventure die down, you cannot help enjoying the book. For it is a perfect medley of everything under the sun, with prose and verse mingled together, and stories, totally different one from another, following upon one another's heels. There is John Buchan's tale of a magic-walking-stick which transported you from place to place—Merlin himself could not have contrived a better; there is A. A. Milne's curious story, "Tigger Comes to The Forest," which has in it Pooh, and Piglet, and Eeyore, and Christopher Robin, and all the others whom we have laughed at so heartily before; there is Algernon Blackwood's odd and beautiful tale which he calls "The Water Performance," and which has in it much of magic and mystery; Dale Mariford has written an extremely amusing bit of satire, called "The Dragon Who Didn't"—satire on the old conventional idea that any princess worth winning has a fire-breathing dragon who must be slain by the daring and heroic prince. And others, many others. Then there is the verse, which, let me call for my own pleasure, the rope-ladders between the top and top-

(*Continued on next page*)



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mast-cross-trees. There are fairy poems, and mermaid poems, and flower poems, and a clever fish poem by Laurence Binyon, and even a giraffe poem—a very humorous bit of verse by Geoffrey Dearmer; though perhaps Ianthe Jerrold's poem, "A Lovely Lady," is the loveliest of all.

Verse or prose,—the child or grown-up is hard to please who cannot find something to his liking in this book, something that will stir his imagination. I cannot help hoping that our friends, A. A. Milne, Rose Fyleman, Hugh Lofting, E. Phillpotts, and all the others who have found their places in "The Treasure Ship," "The Flying Carpet," and this new collection, "Sails of Gold," will keep on writing their delightful stories for children *ad infinitum*—that they may fill the holds of treasure ships brimming full of precious jewels and ornaments, and keep on weaving more and more of their wondrous golden sails.

The Native American

THE INDIAN HOW BOOK. By ARTHUR C. PARKER (Gawaso Wanneh). New York: George H. Doran. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by MARY AUSTIN

AT last there has appeared an Indian book, written by an Indian and reflecting in a hundred subtle ways the Indian's own feeling about his life and environment, which is written for children, and yet manages to convey to the adult mind more penetrating knowledge of Indians than any of the learned volumes prepared for that purpose. Gawaso Wanneh, of the Iroquois, is already known to American young people through his "Skunny Wundy and Other Indian Tales." But in this new book of Indian Hows, stuffed as it is with apt incidents illustrating extraordinarily lucid and charming accounts of how the American aborigine made his tools and houses, found his food, his mate, and his own personal connection with the Great Mystery, we have much more than a book of Indian craft. We have the most convincing revelation of the Indian soul in relation to its environment that has yet been given us. It is as convincing and as authentic as Paul Radin's story of Crashing Thunder, an Indian castaway on the outskirts of white life, and gives the reverse of that picture, an Indian still poised and spiritually self contained, and sufficiently entered into white life at its best to give his own best in return. It is a book which utterly justifies all those who have given their sympathies to the Indian to keep, by showing how completely charming the Indian at his most natural can be.

The book is crammed with directions for making Indian tepees, canoes, traps, war bonnets, and hunting stratagems, and simply and instructively illustrated. Every American youngster would love it for these things alone, and no parent looking for a suitable holiday book need hesitate over "The Indian How Book," no matter how many other outdoor books may be in the children's library already. Camp Leaders, Scout Masters, Woodcrafters, and Campfire Girls looking for things to do outdoors will find this book a compendium of delight. The naturally religious parent who does not adhere to any modern creed and has equally conscientious objections to bringing up his child in an anthropomorphic belief or without any religion at all, can do no better than to teach him the youth's prayer on page 230, beginning

Oh, Great Mystery, my heart is open.

It has long been the belief of the writer that we have terribly wasted our Indians in trying at such pains and expenses to make inferior whites of them; that we should have done better for ourselves and the Indians by preserving them to our children, a precious heritage. And here in this book of Gawaso Wanneh is illustrated the immense service they might have been—with prompt action still could be to our young people—in modulating adult life to the child mind. Between the ages of nine or ten and puberty all children pass through a phase for which our sophistication affords little aid. It is at this age that complete access to the Indian mode of life could be most effective in bridging the gap. The reviewer is personally acquainted with scores of Indians each in his own environment capable of being the guide and companion of American youth in that most difficult period, infinitely to the child's advantage. Probably we shall do nothing so sensible as make this connection for our growing generations. But with "The Indian How Book" we can make a profitable compromise between what we do and ought to do. Incidentally, the parent who buys this book for his children should sit down and read it, to reform his own notions of what primitive life really is in our own country.

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Primitive woman possessed a mysterious force, known as *mana*. She was feared for her power of harm and exalted for her power of fertility. See pages 79-145.

In ancient Athens women were slaves in a slave state. Men's worship of reason lessened their worship of women as goddesses of fertility. See pages 157-168.

The Witch, the Nun, and the Lady stand out as symbols of Mediæval womanhood. See pages 240-301.

In Queen Elizabeth's reign there came a golden period of emancipation for women, but it was shortly ousted by puritanism and the licentious court of Charles II. See pages 310-315.

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Foreign Literature

German Landscape

DER DEUTSCHE IN DER LANDSCHAFT. Edited by RUDOLPH BORCHARDT. Munich: Verlag der Bremer Presse. 1927.

Reviewed by A. W. G. RANDALL

GERMAN travel-literature has much that is remarkable to show, from both the scientific and artistic points of view, but it was late in its beginnings. It can produce no parallels to Hakluyt and Purchas; it has no Marco Polo or Maupertuis. The early German cosmographers, such as Sebastian Münster, wrote in Latin, so did early geographers, such as Klüver, first of that long line of German travelers who felt and knew how to express the fascination of Italy. Travel-description in the vernacular begins more or less at the same time as classical German literature; its limits may be fixed approximately between 1770 and 1870, and it is from writings published within this century that Herr Borchardt has made the extracts that compose this fascinating anthology, a monument at once to German scientific exploration and German descriptive prose.

In his instructive "Nachwort" Herr Borchardt divides his travellers into five categories, those who feel the sensuous attraction of particular landscapes, those with an interest in geological structure, geographers, historians with a special leaning to geography, and the scientists. And in this collection, in fact, the purely literary traveller is hardly to be found. Goethe and Herder are, of course, represented, but both were quite as much scientists and philosophers as men of letters when on their travels. Two women-writers, Bettina von Arnim and Johanna Schopenhauer, are the only strictly unscientific travellers, and their contributions are slight, though the latter's impression of the English country-house deserves to be noted. Practically all the other writers had some scientific motive for their journeying, whether botany, as with Philipp Franz von Siebold's account of Japanese flora, archæology, as with Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer's too-little-known descriptions of Greece and Asia Minor, general scientific exploration, as with the great achievements in South America of the Humboldts, geology, as with Heinrich Nissen's account of the formation of the Italian peninsula. There are even two military landscape-descriptions in this admirably comprehensive collection—Moltke's account of Thrace and Roon's description of Spain from a geographical-strategic point of view.

Regarded purely as science, no doubt most of these descriptions have been overtaken by modern research. But the historian of scientific exploration will always remember most of these pioneers, and, more important to our present purpose, there are many of these pages which are written in perennial characters in the history of classical German prose. Where a harvest so rich has been gathered by so thorough yet discriminating a reaper, it is impossible to do more than single out more than a few of the most notable descriptions. But there is constant fascination in Wilhelm von Humboldt's account of the Orinoco, in Alexander von Humboldt's description of Chimborazo; Eduard Poeppig's impression of standing on the peak of the Andes, and Carl von Martius's pen-picture of the primeval Brazilian forest reveal the poet in the scientist. The sketches of Germany, France, and England are slight and comparatively rare, while the United States does not appear to have been described by any of these classical explorers, or at least Herr Borchardt has not included any of their descriptions. The favorite subject is Italy; in every generation there were writers who asked "Kennst du das Land," in tones not of wistful romanticism, but of scientific enquiry. The answer is given in a score of chapters, by Jakob Grimm, by Ludwig Richter (an account of Olevano, surely one of the most deservedly popular resorts of artists in Italy), by Wilhelm Heinse, on Rome and Tivoli. With this book one can travel vicariously round the world; not only in German readers will it stir the "Wanderlust."

Readers of Roger Martin du Gard's "Thibault" who have been looking forward to the continuation of the romance will be interested to learn that the fourth, fifth, sixth and possibly the seventh parts of the work will appear during the course of next year. They will be published respectively under the titles "La Consultation," "La Sorella," "La Mort du Pere," and "L'Appareillage."

Foreign Notes

ICELAND has recently been watching performances of a play by a woman dramatist whose reputation as a novelist is already considerable in that country. Kristin Sigusdottir, of peasant origin, is in every sense a self-made woman, having even taught herself to read and write. After her marriage she ran a farm, churning butter and working in the fields. While thus employed she published two novels which won her acclaim both in Iceland and on the Scandinavian peninsula.

❧ ❧

André Billy and Moise Twersky, who with the "Fléau du Savoir" began an epic portrayal of the Jews, have now published a second volume retailing further the adventures of their hero, Menache Foigel. "Comme Dieu en France" (Plon), as the book is called, recounts the experiences of Foigel and his wife, after they reached France whither they had sought refuge from the hostility to their race that prevailed in Russia. After a difficult adjustment to their new environment the charm of their adopted country had just begun to pervade them when the war broke out. The ex-Russians, confronted with the calamity, discovered at once the difference between their own reactions to it and those of the native French. Their one idea being to protect themselves against the devastating madness which had seized upon France, they resolved to leave Paris. The book is one of genuine merit.

❧ ❧

In the death of Ricardo Guiraldes, Argentina has lost a poet and novelist of much distinction. Signor Guiraldes was particularly appreciated in France where he was the friend of many of the leading writers of the day. In his own country, too, he was highly regarded, his volume of poems entitled "El Cencerro de Cristal," and his novels "Raucho," "Xaimaca," and "Don Segundo Somora" having had widespread popularity.

❧ ❧

Students of European history will find in Professor Joseph Redlich's "Oesterreichische Regierung und Verwaltung im Weltkriege" (Vienna: Hölder-Pilcher-Tempsky) one of the most illuminating studies of the Austrian Empire from the settlement of 1867 to the outbreak of the World War and during the period of that struggle, that is available. Professor Redlich concludes his book with an analysis of the reasons that made possible the readjustment of Austria after the war without the precipitation of general chaos, and of the grounds on which government officials felt justified in transferring their allegiance from one régime to another.

❧ ❧

Jean Dorsenne, who has had access to all the letters which Gauguin wrote to his wife between the time of his betrothal and his death, has recently published a volume, "La Vie Sentimentale de Paul Gauguin" (Paris: Cahiers de la Quinzaine), which reveals a tragic incompatability of temperament and ideals between husband and wife. As is of course known, Gauguin for a time was a successful stock broker but afterwards gave up financial security and social position to lead the life of an artist and a Bohemian. His wife, whose standards and interests were of the most conventional, was irreconcilable to his new mode of life, and remained obdurate to all his importunities. Since he loved her, and was separated from her—she would not accompany him to Tahiti—the estrangement was very bitter to him.

❧ ❧

Under the auspices of the German Officers' Union, the former German Crown Prince has published a pamphlet based on the Reichsarchiv's official account of the Marne campaign. "Der Marne-Feldzug 1914" (Berlin: Dob Verlag) is a narrative that glosses over Germany's failures and mistakes in that battle and that throws emphasis on anything that can be accounted in its favor. The Crown Prince throws the greatest share for the blame on Moltke whom he depicts as a man without moral influence, fearful of dangers that had no actual existence, and entirely different from the conception of him which the Kaiser had formed in peace times.

❧ ❧

It is reported that one of the two Nobel Prizes for literature to be awarded this year will probably go to the Italian novelist, Grazia Deledda. Though her works are little known in America Signora Deledda has been immensely popular in her own country.

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Children's Books

Tales of Other Lands

By MARGERY WILLIAMS

(*See page* 304)

MARBACKA. By *Selma Lagerlöf.*

THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURES OF NILS. By *Selma Lagerlöf.*

DITTE: GIRL ALIVE. By *Martin Anderson Nexö.*

HONEYBEE. By *Anatole France.*

THE POPE'S MULE. By *Alphonse Daudet.*

LITTLE PRINCESS NINA. By *L. A. Charskaya.*

THE ADVENTURES OF MAYA THE BEE. By *Waldemar Bonsel.*

WHAT HAPPENED TO INGER JOHANNE. By *Dikken Zwilgmeyer.*

POUM: THE ADVENTURES OF A LITTLE BOY. By *Paul* and *Victor Margueritte.*

THE LITTLE BLUE MAN. By *Giuseppe Fanciulli.*

Folk Tales

Suggested by HELEN FORBES

THE FAIRY RING. Edited by *Wiggin* and *Smith.* Illustrated by *Elizabeth MacKinstry.* Doubleday. $1.50.

THE BLUE FAIRY BOOK: THE RED FAIRY BOOK: THE GREEN FAIRY BOOK. Edited by *Andrew Lang.* Longmans. $1.75.

ENGLISH FAIRY TALESS MORE ENGLISH FAIRY TALES. Edited by *Joseph Jacobs.* Putnam. $1.75. No child is equipped for understanding English literature without a thorough acquaintance with more than one of these collections and there are no books of folklore more dearly loved.

IRISH FAIRY TALES. By *James Stephens.* Illustrated by *Arthur Rackham.* Macmillan. $2.50.

HANSEL AND GRETEL and other stories by brothers Grimm. Illustrated by KAY NEILSEN. Doran. $5.00. An impressively large gift book with interesting pictures.

THE SHOEMAKER'S APRON: CZECHOSLOVAK FAIRY TALES. By *Parker Fillmore.* Illustrated by JAN MATULKA. Harcourt. $2.50.

THE WONDER-SMITH AND HIS SON. Retold by *Ella Young.* Illustrated by *Boris Artzybasheff.* Longmans. $2.25.

EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON. Illustrated by KAY NIELSEN. Doran. $5.00. EAST O' THE SUN AND WEST O' THE MOON. By *Sir George Dasent.* Putnam. $1.75. Kay Nielsen's pictures make the first of these volumes of Danish folklore a striking book, but the second has twice as many stories and is altogether more satisfying to children's tastes.

THE EPIC OF KINGS. Retold from Firdusi's "Shah Nameh" by *Helen Zimmern.* Illustrated by *Wilfred Jones.* Macmillan. $2.50. The Persian heroes.

SKAZKI: LEGENDS OF OLD RUSSIA. Told by *Ida Zeitlin.* Illustrated by *Theodore Nadejen.* Doran. $5.00. This contains, among others, the story from which the opera Coq d'Or was made.

Recent Stories

A List for Boys and Girls from Twelve to Fourteen

Suggested by JACQUELINE OVERTON

DOWNRIGHT DENCEY. By *Caroline Dale Snedeker.* Doubleday, Page. $2. A delightful story of old Quaker Nantucket.

"SEWING SUSIE." By *Elsie Singmaster.* Houghton Mifflin. $1.50. Gettysburg and the part a fourteen year old girl had in the battle.

MEREDITH'S ANN. By *Elizabeth Janet Gray.* Doubleday, Page. $2. A story with a mystery, a fine family of children and a pleasant sense of White Mountain country.

RAQUEL OF THE RANCH COUNTRY. By *Alida Sims Malkus.* Harcourt, Brace. $2. How a girl came back from an Eastern boarding school and held her father's ranch during the war.

CHILDREN OF THE MOUNTAIN EAGLE. By *Elizabeth Cleveland Miller.* Doubleday, Page. $2. A fine, vigorous story of peasant children in the mountains of Albania that will appeal to many older boys and girls.

ROSELLE OF THE NORTH. By *Constance Lindsay Skinner.* Macmillan Co. $1.75. Roselle, a white girl, lives among the Indians and French Canadian fur-traders of the Northwest in the days when the Hudson Bay Co. and the Northwest Co. were rivals.

(*Continued on page* 312)

Not a best seller—and will probably never become one

THIS we say because Werfel's last book, *Verdi, A Novel of the Opera,* should have become a best-seller if simply great literature itself makes for best sellers. But to date *Verdi* has sold a little over 2,400 copies.

Werfel's new book, *The Man Who Conquered Death,* is the story of a man who must live four months longer (until his 65th birthday) so that his family may collect the precious insurance. His pathetic confidence in the life-insurance man (who because he started in life as a *schlemiel* turned out to be a *schnorrer*) and his faith in the calendar are real—what shall we say—real, solid life and literature.

As publishers of *The Story of Philosophy* and *Trader Horn* (two books of similar merit, which actually did enter the best seller lists) we recommend Werfel's new book, *The Man Who Conquered Death.*

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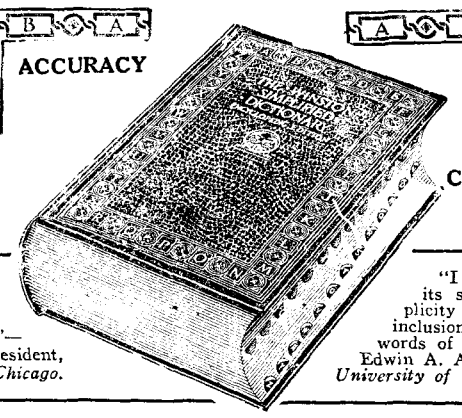

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GOOD BOOKS

The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 6. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the most convincing extracts (totaling not more than 400 words) from a diary supposed to have been kept by Edgar Allan Poe during his schooldays at Stoke Newington. (Entries for this competition should be mailed to reach *The Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of November 14).

Competition No. 7. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the most trenchant epigram, in not more than eight lines of rhymed verse, on the passing of the old model Ford. (Entries for this competition should be mailed to reach *The Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of November 21).

Competitors are advised to read very carefully the rules printed below.

THE THIRD COMPETITION

The Eighteenth Amendment has just been revoked. Mr. H. L. Mencken, too full for his accustomed prose, bursts into dithyrambic verse in his next editorial in THE AMERICAN MERCURY.

PERHAPS a point was missed because of the misprint that crept into the text of this competition. It read "too full of his accustomed prose," instead of "too full *for*." I had hoped to tempt Mr. Mencken himself to anticipate the (I hope) ultimate day. "Unluckily," he replied, "it would strain me unbearably to write a poem . . . I have not done so for nearly thirty years and my old superb facility is completely decayed." But I heartily disagree with one competitor who insists, firstly, that Mr. Mencken could not write verse, and, secondly, that he would not. The editor of *The American Mercury* would certainly be no Keats or Shelley, much less a Wordsworth; but he might easily have been something less than Pope and something more than Peter Pindar. Anyway, here was a chance to shoo him off his guard. "Dithyrambics" suggested it, but nobody was successfully dithyrambic. Even the prizewinners do not offer the kind of thing that I, arbitrarily, imagine Mr. Mencken would have written.

John D. Harvey made a courageous bid with his "The Eighteenth Commandment Blows Off the Foam." I liked it all the more because Mr. Mencken is made to turn agin the government.

Zu lachen, zu lachen, O machen, abmachen,
The Eighteenth Commandment is all to the bad.
Who'd whiz again, sizz again, swill a gin-fizz again
When we got a real thrill out of laws that we had?

O rum pegs and boot legs and dry agents loot kegs,
Why get up and shout when we've learned how to lie?
Who'd wake up to take cup from government shake-up,
Since erst we were wet cuz we said we were dry.

But I miss Mr. Mencken's kick.

THE PRIZEWINNING ENTRIES

Homer M. Parsons of San Bernardino, Cal., would have taken the prize whole but for his fourth stanza. He is awarded ten dollars; the other five go to Garland Smith of Athens, Ga., for an ode which I like to think Mr. Mencken might perhaps have written at the end of a heavy evening.

(INTRO.: TROMBONE SOLO)
My bellowings diurnal,
By which I earn my bread,
At last with help infernal
Filled Congressmen with dread,
Till, yielding to my journal,
They knocked the wowsers dead.

(SOFTLY, VIOLINS)
The Bible belt is busted;
The godly trousers slip;
And here and there, disgusted,
The preacher packs his grip,
His hormones disadjusted,
*And welts upon his hip.**

*If this were prose, I should have the delicacy to refer to it as *sitzplatz*. A poet, however, like every other mutt, needs license.—H. L. M.

Homer M. Parsons.

(UKELELE ACCOMPANIMENT)
No longer on the prairie
The corn-fed yokel wails,
For mellow Tom and Jerry
Now pacify his ails—
And city streets are merry
With children toting pails.

(FULL ORCHESTRA WITH BAG PIPES)
I'll joy in over-bowling
The enemies of Rum,
And with fine frenzy rolling
My editorial drum,
I'll raise red hell controlling
This new millennium!

II

ODE

on the Repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America.

Ring out, wild bells! Bawl forth a louder blast!
Homo Americano's free at last!
No longer shall a blithering booboisie
Dull tyrants be,
And by their tricks connive,
Conspire, and deprive
The innocent majority of its licker.
No more shall gaping yokels grin and snicker,
And roar, "By gum! By gosh!
Them moral guys in Wash—
Ington has got the city swells fixed fine!"
Nor need the pious Methodist now pine
For fabled Beulah, land of corn and wine.
From every mountain-side
Rings freedom, as with pride
Its sons point out the stills they did so lately hide.

Now sprightly youths and gals no longer bask
In th' opulent glory of the pocket-flask,
Since every worthy soul like me and you
Can buy its modest dram, and gently stew.
Then bound, ye lambs! Ye bulls and bears, rejoice!
With one glad howl the nation lifts its voice
To celebrate
Its freed estate,
While baffled morons rage, and yell a Hymn of Hate.

Garland Smith.

RULES

(Competitors failing to comply with rules will be disqualified.)

1. Envelopes should be addressed to "The Competitions Editor, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 25 West 45th street, New York City." The number of the competition (e.g., "Competition 1") must be written on the top left-hand corner.
2. All MSS. must be legible—typewritten if possible—and should bear the name or pseudonym of the author. Only one side of the paper should be used. Prose entries must be clearly marked off at the end of each fifty words. Competitors may offer more than one entry. MSS. cannot be returned.
3. *The Saturday Review* reserves the right to print the whole or part of any entry. The decision of the Competitions Editor is final and he can in no circumstances enter into correspondence.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Juvenile

CHILDREN OF ANCIENT GAUL. By L. LAMPREY. Little, Brown. 1927. $1.75.

This, the fifth of Miss Lamprey's series of children of ancient times, seems particularly good. Children of today will read it with pleasure, for it has enough of a story running through it to make it a connected narrative, and there is adventure and a suggestion of mystery, and sufficient mixture of the new and strange with the old and familiar to make it all seem real, and not merely a tale of something that happened long ago. The book will also be of interest to teachers in connection with their work with children in the study of primitive life. It could be supplementary to the Cave Men series already used in so many schools, and although the youngest children might not understand all its allusions, it is written in a manner they would enjoy. Such books as this, the result of an intelligent imagination working from assumptions fundamentally true even if factually unproved, are ideal preparation for the later studies of actual historical events.

HEROES OF MODERN ADVENTURE. By T. C. BRIDGES and H. HESSELL TILTMAN. Little, Brown. 1927. $2.

This is a volume of perhaps a score of recitals of the most important feats of adventure and exploration within the twentieth century, dealing with the exploits of such prominent men as Amundsen, Jean Charcot, Alan Cobham, Grenfell, Lindbergh. The narrative being limited to a review of circumstance, very little of the romance or atmosphere of the various achievements has been woven into the book. It leaves the reader with a fairly accurate picture of events, but such art as has been incorporated in the effort to create stories of high adventure has not risen above sentimentality. Yet the material alone will suffice to give an otherwise not very noteworthy book an appeal to boys above ten years of age.

THE BOY'S BOOK OF EXPERIMENTS. By A. FREDERICK COLLINS. Crowell. 1927. $2.

This is a well assembled collection of experiments in physics and chemistry that can be performed with a minimum of special apparatus. They are arranged in order of related subjects. The first chapter is devoted to experimenting with matter, force, and time. Next comes a chapter on machines. The third chapter deals with sound, followed up by chapters on heat, light, electricity, and radio. The last part of the book is devoted to experiments of a chemical nature. Starting with experiments requiring very simple apparatus the reader is taught to make much of his own apparatus as his proficiency increases. Diagrams and working outlines help to clarify the descriptive material. The book should prove a real delight to boys and girls interested in working things out for themselves.

Teachers in general science, physics, and chemistry will find helpful suggestions both for their own demonstrations and for independent work on the part of the student. This is a good collection of natural science material, written so that it teaches as it entertains.

WONDER TALES OF ARCHITECTURE. By L. LAMPREY. Stokes. 1927. $2.50.

Very interesting material this, conceived with imagination but poorly carried out. This is true both of text and illustrations. There are eighteen sketches of different types of national life as expressed in some characteristic building, (an excellent idea to start with) told as a story centering about some youngster of the period, a method of approach this author has used before to good advantage. Four of the illustrations are in attractive color and one is about to conclude that here is a real find for the children's history or geography shelf, when a closer look gives us pause. The style is distinctly second rate and so is the technique of the illustrations. Phrases, stilted as an old guide book, alternate with oversimplified conversational expressions, a good beginning to an imaginative description trails off to a lame end, and when we come to such glaring inaccuracies as the use of "cone" as a synonym for "pyramid" we question even the scholarship of the rest. On the whole we think we should not put the book on the children's shelf. It would have done in our own day, but educational standards have moved up; we do not like to give our children bad art for the sake of good instruction now. But what a pity that a little more time was not put on this book to make it really worth while.

FROM OUT MAGDALA. By LUCILLE BORDEN. Macmillan. 1927. $2.50.

Once upon a time there were two good little girls, Phyllis and Patience, twins aged three, who lived happily with their father, Lord Hensleigh, their mother and their big brother, Terence, in an English castle. But a wicked gypsy woman from over the sea stole Patience and bore her away to southern France, and that was the last her poor parents saw of Patience for sixteen long years. During that time Phyllis grew up to be a worldly London belle, while Patience, rescued from her cruel captors by a brave young knight, was reared in Provence under the loving guardianship of a pious lady whose later life was spent in preparing to be cordially received in the next world. At last, when the two girls were nineteen, the entire family were reunited. It would be almost impossible to comment seriously on such puerile twaddle.

THE LITTLEST ONE: HIS BOOK. By MARION ST. JOHN WEBB. Crowell. 1927. $2.

THE FOUR WINDS. By EDITH BALLINGER PRICE. Stokes. 1927. $2.50.

LET'S PRETEND. By GEORGETTE AGNEW. Putnam. 1927. $1.75.

GOD'S DARK. By JOHN MARTIN. Doran. 1927. $1.25.

A certain fine quality of imagination, combined with an appreciation of the child's point of view, mark some of the poems in Mrs. Webb's volume. We like to remember "Blue Curtains;" it carries you with it in a gale of delight. The elimination of several selections that are technically faulty or banal, and others that are loaded with an over-generous supply of sentiment, would greatly enhance the merit of the volume as a whole.

An outstanding poem in "The Four Winds" is entitled "East,"—a fine bit of description, with its remarkable singing quality that is produced by an unusual rhyme scheme. A certain charm is manifest in the descriptions of the little commonplace household things,—"Clothes," "The Dining Room;" and we like "The Blind Child in the Garden" who "listens down the wind to hear a star."

In "Let's Pretend" and "God's Dark" it seems that the art of the decorators has outstripped that of the authors. Mr. Martin as an editor perhaps makes more valuable contributions to juvenile literature than when he assumes the rôle of poet.

CHRISTMAS IN STORYLAND. By MAUD VAN BUREN and KATHARINE I. BEMIS. Century. 1927. $2.

Thirty Christmas stories make up a fresh and interesting collection which two librarians have selected and the Century Company has just brought out. Even had no such noted names as Carolyn Wells, Selma Lagerlöf, George Madden Martin, or Elsie Singmaster been signed to these tales, they would have made their way on their own delightful merits. Any age will enjoy them, just as any age enjoys Christmas, and the mother and teacher will find in them that *rara avis*, the story which lends itself to story-telling.

The stories are short, they are varied in character, and they have about them the sound and spicy sweetness of pine trees and holly wreaths, gingerbread, and stars, which is the real flavor of the Christmas season.

GIRL SCOUT STORIES. (Second Book.) Edited by HELEN FERRIS. Doran. 1927. $2.

It is true, as Dorothy Canfield says in her introduction to the second volume of Girl Scout Stories, that the adolescent girl has been sadly neglected by fiction writers. She has been hard pressed to find books dealing with her own particular problems and interests and, consequently, has read those written for younger or much older readers.

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(*Continued on next page*)

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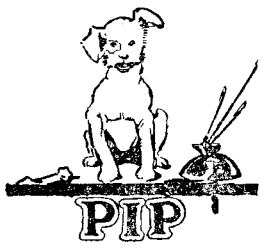

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The New Books

Juvenile

(*Continued from preceding page*)

PRINCE MELODY IN MUSIC LAND. By ELIZABETH SIMPSON. Knopf. 1927.

Music teachers and mothers of embryo musicians will be delighted to enlist the services of this remarkably clever little book, first published in 1917. It is a musical fairy tale, masking its very real and wholly trustworthy lessons in a transparent veil of humorous incidents. Of course, it is as supplementary reading that the book is most valuable. After a child has learned his first lessons, and has acquired an elementary knowledge of notes and their functions, this book, while apparently telling a story, might rekindle his interest, impressing more vividly on his mind the ground just covered.

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THE ELF OF DISCONTENT and Other Plays. By RITA BENTON. New York: George H. Doran. $2.

Whenever anyone has asked us to recommend some Bible plays for children we have suggested the book by Rita Benton as having more of the virtues and fewer of the failings than other collections of which we knew. We have much the same feeling about this latest group of Miss Benton's plays, and while we cannot go the lengths of Mr. John Farrar's almost fervidly favorable introduction, we agree with him that the plays are for the most part straightforward, simple, and with good dramatic quality. There is color and life and imagination, and the dialogue is natural and often rather jolly and clever.

But when Miss Benton turns preacher and begins to talk about "divine discontent" and other high thoughts, then we protest, and so, we feel sure, would the children, if anyone took the trouble to ask their opinion. Now children like moral tales and the moral need not be sugar-coated or subtle in order to have them swallow it willingly, but they do not like to be preached to, any more than we do. Even in the plays for older children, which frankly take the form of exposition, we cannot, however much we approve the purpose that prompted Miss Benton's efforts, feel that she has been successful. The Purpose is so plain that it hides the play. She seems to us, therefore, happiest when she is purely in fun, as in "The Silver Arrow of Robin Hood," or frankly telling a moral fairy tale, as in "Queen Cross Patch" or "The Happy Prince." In her next volume we hope that she will forget all about being purposeful and earnest and will just gather up her toy balloons and cherry pies and princesses and fairies and go out and have an awfully good time with the children.

DETOUR. By *Norrell Gregory*. Greenberg. $2.

ONCE UPON A TIME IN DELAWARE. By *Katharine Pyle*. Edited by Emily P. Bissell. Dutton. $1.50.

THE ADVENTURES OF CHICAI. By *Paola Lombroso*. Carrara. Putnam. $2.50.

DAVID GOES TO BAFFIN LAND. By *David Binney Putnam*. Putnam. $1.75.

AMONG THE ALPS WITH BRADFORD. By *Bradford Washburn*. Putnam. $1.75.

HIGHDAYS AND HOLIDAYS. By *Florence Adams* and *Elizabeth McCarrick*. Dutton.

THE SHADOW ON THE DIAL. By *Augusta Huiell Seaman*. Century. $1.75.

A HANDBOOK OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. By *Emelyn E. Gardner* and *Eloise Ramsey*. Scott, Foresman. $2.

LADY GREEN SATIN AND HER MAID ROSETTE. Macmillan. $1.75.

THE MOON'S BIRTHDAY. By *Dorothy Rowe*. Macmillan. $2.

THE YEAR'S BEST STORIES FOR BOYS. Edited by Ralph Henry Barbour. Dodd, Mead. $1.75.

ALICE IN JUNGLELAND. By *Mary Hastings Bradley*. Appleton. $2.

ARMISTICE DAY. Compiled and edited by A. P. Sanford and Robert Haven Schauffler. Dodd, Mead. $2.

THE YOUNG FOLKS' BOOK OF FISHES. By *Ida Mellen*. Dodd, Mead. $2.

SILVER DICE. By *Emilie Benson Knipe* and *Alden Arthur Knipe*. Dodd, Mead. $2.

THE ANIMAL ALPHABET. By *Harrison Cady*. Houghton Mifflin. $2.

THE GNOME KING OF OX. By *Ruth Plumly Thompson*. Reilly & Lee.

ALICE AND THE TEENIE WEENIES. By *William Donahey*. Reilly & Lee.

TEPEE TALES. By *El Comancho*. Reilly & Lee.

LEFT OF THE LABRADOR. By *Dillon Wallace*. $1.75.

RHYMES OF IF AND WHY. By *Betty Sage*. Duffield.

A DAY WITH BETTY ANNE. By *Dorothy W. Baruch*. Harpers. $1.50.

WHITE SWALLOW. By *Emma Gelders Sterne*. Duffield. $2 net.

MOPSA THE FAIRY. By *Jean Ingelow*. Harpers. $1.75.

I LIVE IN A CITY. By *James S. Tippett*. Harpers. 75 cents.

THE HARRISON CHILDREN. By *Otto M.* and *Mabel S. Becker*. Doubleday, Page. $1.75 net.

THE BILLY BANG BOOK. By *Mabel Guinnip La Rue*. Macmillan. $1.

UNDER THE STORY TREE. By *Mabel Guinnip La Rue*. Macmillan. $1.

IN ANIMAL LAND. By *Mabel Guinnip La Rue*. Macmillan. $1.

THE FUN-BOOK. By *Mabel Guinnip La Rue*. Macmillan. $1.

MRS. LEICESTER'S SCHOOL. By *Charles* and *Mary Lamb*. Dutton. $3.

JUNGLE JOHN. By *John Bulden*. Longmans, Green. $2.50.

DOCTOR DOLITTLE'S GARDEN. By *Hugh Lofting*. Stokes. $2.50.

FORWARD HO! By *Perry Newberry*. Stokes. $2.

A TRULY LITTLE GIRL. By *Nora Archibald Smith*. Houghton Mifflin. $1.75.

THE MERRY PILGRIM. Translated by *Merriam Sherwood*. Macmillan.

CORNELL. By *Johanna Spyri*. Crowell. $1.50 net.

TALES WORTH TELLING. By *Charles J. Finger*. Century. $3.50.

THE CHILDREN'S BOOK OF AMERICAN LANDMARKS. By *Lorinda Munson Bryant*. Century. $2.50.

THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON. By *Johann David Wyss*. Minton, Balch. $2.50.

AN OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS. Edited by *Reginald T. Townsend*. Doubleday, Page.

MAGPIE LANE. By *Nancy Byrd Turner*. Illustrated by *Decie Merwin*. Harcourt, Brace.

THE BOY SCOUTS' YEAR BOOK. Edited by *Franklin K. Mathiews*. Appleton. $2.50.

TRAIL BLAZERS OF THE SKY. By *John Prentice Langley*. Barse and Hopkins.

YOUR GROWING CHILD. By *H. Addison Bruce*. Funk & Wagnalls. $2.50 net.

ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE, PHILADELPHIA. 1851-1926. By Francis X. Talbot. Philadelphia: St. Joseph's College.

RED RIVER TRAIL. By *E. C. Brill*. Macrae-Smith.

THE RED FAIRY BOOK. By *Andrew Lang*. Macrae-Smith.

Children's Books

(*Continued from page* 309)

MIDWINTER. By *Katherine Adams*. Macmillan. $1.75. A sequel to her book "Midsummer" with the scenes again laid and legends of the heroines of old in Sweden.

ONCE IN FRANCE. By *Marguerite Clement*. Doubleday, Page. $2. Charming stories of France.

THE FLAMING ARROW. By *Carl Moon*. Stokes. $2.50. Boys who enjoyed "Lost Indian Magic" by the same author will like this tale of Che-Loo, the Pueblo boy.

GAY-NECK. By *Dhan Gopal Mukerji*. Little, Brown. $2. The life story of a carrier pigeon and his service during the World War. This book will have a special appeal for any boy or girl who has ever kept pigeons as pets.

THE TRADE WIND. By *Cornelia Meigs*. Little, Brown. $2. A lively adventure story with a fine flavor about it of the sea and old ships.

LOG OF A COWBOY. By *Andy Adams*. Houghton Mifflin. $2. One of the best cowboy stories ever written. It has been republished in a new edition for the Riverside Bookshelf.

TALES WORTH TELLING. By *Charles Finger*. Century. $3.50. More strange tales from South America, Mexico, and other places, with pictures by Paul Honoré.

AS THE CROW FLIES. By *Cornelia Meigs*. Macmillan. $1.75. A story of Zebulon Pike and the Mississippi River in the early days.

COW COUNTRY. By *Will James*. Scribner. $3.50. More short stories of the range country and cowboys and their ponies with some of the best pictures Will James has ever drawn.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review.*

Elizabeth Bunting, Madison, Wis., sends me so good a list of stories for children for four to ten that I gladly add them to those already named.

FIRST of all come H. E. Marshall's histories. I began them at seven. They are historically accurate and contain many charming stories. They are: "Our Island Story" (about England) (Stokes), "Scotland's Story" (Stokes), "Our Empire Story" (Stokes), "This Country of Ours" (the United States) (Doran), "A History of France" (Doran). I have lent them to many children who have devoured them just as I did. They make excellent stories to tell.

Next are the E. Nesbit books. I am always shocked to find how few people know these heavenly books. "The Treasure Seekers," "The Would-be-Goods," and "Five of Us and Madeline," are in American editions: the others, such as "The Phoenix and the Carpet" and "The Railway Children" are only in English editions, but they can undoubtedly be ordered or procured at a public library. (Note by M. L. B.: While looking for them keep an eye open also for "The Psammead" a long-lost Nesbit of my own).

Among the fairy tales I like best "English Fairy Tales" told by Joseph Jacobs and George Macdonald's "The Light Princess" and "The Princess and the Goblin." Some nice animal tales, all highly imaginary, are contained in "The Talking Beasts," by Wiggin and Smith (Grosset & Dunlap). And there is always Kenneth Grahame's "The Wind in the Willows" (Dodd, Mead). (Note: Yes, but you'd be even more shocked to know how few American children, taking the country over, know this enchanting book).

I would recommend, especially for little boys, "Toby Tyler, or, Ten Weeks with a Circus" and "Mr. Stubbs' Brother," by James Otis, published by Harper. "The Peterkin Papers," by Lucretia Hale (Houghton Mifflin), and her "Last of the Peterkins" (Little, Brown), were read to me long before I was ten, and were greatly enjoyed. I must remember another—"The Slow Coach," by E. V. Lucas, is lovely, and has some delightful children in it.

I WOULD like personal reports on books about archaeology interesting to children, to be forwarded to Mrs. Thomson, one who realizes the importance of thus "bringing the Past into the Present" and the ease with which it may be accomplished. The vogue of this little "Buried Cities," for instance, shows how children love to get back into a world before their time, for this book has taken hold on its own merits, being one of the sort hard to classify in collections. "The Life of the Ancient East," by James Baikie (Macmillan), is not a child's book but is certainly one that a family will gladly read; its range is wider than most books on the romance of excavation. I have several times advised parents to get the four large volumes of J. A. Hammerton's collection of articles by authorities, "Wonders of the Past" (Putnam), and keep it on a shelf easy to reach as one of these browsing-books so useful at home. It has great numbers of large pictures, photographed and in natural colors, making a sort of stationary moving-picture show of the ancient world as it was and as its relics appear today. "Boys of the Ages," by L. W. Scales (Ginn), and "Children of Ancient Egypt," by L. Lamprey (Little, Brown), are for children themselves to read, trustworthy and interesting. "The Book of the Ancient World for Younger Readers," by Dorothy Mills (Putnam), is for somewhat older children, but is not beyond any child interested in the subject. Dorothy Vaughan's "Great Peoples of the Ancient World" (Longmans, Green), is another valuable collection of story-form historical sketches.

M. H. G., Chapel Hill., N. C., is preparing a list of novels dealing with the social problems of the unmarried mother and with those of illegitimacy in general.

I WAS told by the "reader's assistant" in the public library of a large city to the Westward that she kept Romain Rolland's "The Soul Enchanted" (Holt)—now in its third volume, "Mother and Son," after "Annette and Sylvie" and "Summer"—at hand to lend to unmarried mothers building up a place for themselves in the community and in the world. It meets the situation squarely, for Annette loses her money when her son is still a baby, and must work hard for his living. The latest novel on this subject brings back Karen Michaelis, whose "The Dangerous Age" had a not undangerous popularity some dozen years since. Her new novel is "Venture's End" (Harcourt, Brace), the story of a family and of the woman who takes the sole responsibility for it. "The Story of Louie," by Oliver Onions (Doran), now incorporated—with two other remarkable novels bearing on a strange murder—in "Whom God Hath Sundered" (Doran), has an unmarried mother as the central character. The problem of illegitimacy enters into most Scandinavian peasant-novels—such as "Growth of the Soil," "Ditte," "Pelle the Conqueror," —and several of their heroines have quite frankly given it up. The position of the nameless child before the law is in "The Green Alleys" (Macmillan) and his position in society is brought into pathetic relief in the earlier chapters of Johan Bojer's "The Great Hunger" (Century).

AS soon as I read Hilaire Belloc's article on Beckford's "Vathek" in a recent issue I knew there would be a call on this department for it, and so was in a position to tell *K. M. R.* at once that the only way I knew for him to get it was to search second-hand stores: Lippincott once had an edition and there was a "limp leather" one from Pott, but they are swept away with the years. Yet I was a trifle wistful when K. M. R. asked at the same time for news of "Rasselas." Has the Prince of Abyssinia indeed been gathered to his fathers; do the men of today know him no more? Look, then, upon the copy you may buy for a dollar from the Oxford University Press, with the annotations of no less an authority than Birkbeck Hill. If you require a more luxurious volume, the edition published by Dutton with the woodcuts of Douglas Perry will cost you four dollars. The old Nimmo and Bain volume of "Old English Romances, 1883," had "Vathek" and "Rasselas" together.

George L. Tripp, of the New Bedford Library, is reminded, by the inquiry concerning the stimulation of interest in reading Latin, that when he visited Burton Stevenson (now Librarian of the American Library in Paris) at his home in Chillicothe some years ago he saw a copy of his "The Boule Cabinet," which had been put into Latin, with the idea of interesting young students in the language by exciting interest in a particularly thrilling story. He says he doesn't think Mr. Stevenson had anything to do with the publication. *Edwin Robert Petre, of the Institute of Foreign Travel*, says that though there may be no English or American novel with Thomas à Becket for hero, there is "Der Heilige," by Conrad Ferdinand Meyer. *Clifford Bissell, Berkeley, Cal.*, also mentions "Der Heilige" as powerful, vivid, and not long. *Elise Noyes of the Stamford Bookstore (Conn.)* adds to the books on modern Africa four that are in a class with Coudenhove, "wonderful in taking a sympathetic rather than a tourist's standpoint:" —Jean Mackenzie's "African Clearings" (Houghton Mifflin); J. and J. Tharaud's "The Long Walk at Samba Diouff" (Duffield); Llewellyn Powys's "Ebony and Ivory" and "Black Laughter" (Harcourt, Brace). *Edith Hull, Baltimore, Md.*, says she thinks the book H. A. M. is after is "Seven Keys to Baldpate." *Edward F. Stevens, Pratt Institute*, reports that this library possesses another edition than those named of the "Poems of Winthrop Mackworth Praed: revised and complete edition, N. Y., White, Stokes and Allen, 1885," and says that though long out of print it is not beyond the reach of second-hand dealers. *C. C., New York*, asks for a poem about a wood-carver whose saint for a church was rejected, repainted and sold for a ship's figurehead, wrecked, and carried off by Neptune's daughter to an ocean grotto. He scorned her advances for

Beneath his coat of paint
The wooden-headed lunatic thought he was still a saint.

It was published here with credit to an English paper.

J. G. M., Gadsden, Ala., asks if Napier's "History of the Peninsular War" is still in print.

I CAN find no edition now in print, but there is a small volume (paper, 25 cents) of selections from Napier's "Peninsular War" published by the Oxford University Press in its series of Select English Classics.

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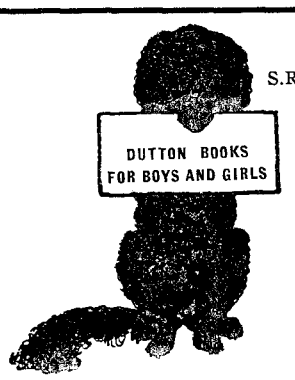

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Points of View

"Sun and Moon"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

My attention has been called to a review of my book "Sun and Moon" on page 981 of the issue of your paper for July 16th, and, while the correspondent who forwarded the clipping called it too stupid to merit an answer, I think that in justice to the quality of your *Review* as well as to the novel itself some reply should be made.

The opening sentence of the review implies that the novel is a missionary tract against Chinese customs and civilization which is very far from the case. I deplore almost wholly the methods and results of American missionary work in China and if any protest can be read between the lines of the story—which I doubt—it would be protest against the new customs introduced by American influence in China which have gone so far to destroy the real Chinese civilization. Actually, the customs mentioned in the book are only those incidental to the progress of the story and such as the reviewer, if he has a reading knowledge of Chinese, will find introduced much more amply into almost any Chinese novel, old or new. I have relied not only on my own experience of China, which I venture to say is as intimate as that of your reviewer, but on the judgment of other men (not missionary) of long residence in China for the truth of these details and have their unanimous agreement as to the book's being a fair and accurate picture. To say that "by implication every Chinese influence is bad, leading the characters away from desirable Occidental manners and points of view," is to argue beside the question: the plot, based on an actual case, does no more than show that these Chinese influences were bad for the Occidental characters with whom the story mainly is concerned. A parenthetical comment such as "how Mr. Gowen delights in the wicked ways of these women!" is one of those bits of facetious journalese which may help to give the review a smart and lively appearance but which do not take the place of honest criticism, especially when the remark, smacking of college journalism, happens to be without foundation.

As to the statement that "the novel is not skilful, nor is it forceful enough to hold our attention for long," not one of the reviewers, English or American, has been clever enough to detect this. I hope you will pardon my quoting one review (the most critical, by the way) as having particular bearing on this point. This is a review by a man who is presumed to know something about the constuction of a novel: it is by Arnold Bennett and is taken from the *Evening Standard* of the 23rd June.

The most striking new novel (probably a first novel, too) that has lately come under my eyes is "Sun and Moon," by Vincent Gowen. The subject itself is both very striking and fresh: the history of two English children brought up by a widowed father who married several Chinese wives (together) and keeps a concubine or so in the house. The two English children, having been reared chiefly on Chinese principles, accept the domestic polity of their homes as perfectly natural. The author escapes being offensive to British susceptibilities by a simple, natural candor. The characters are very well drawn, the plot is excellently managed, and the fault of the book is the woodenness of the dialogue: a matter of phrasing only; in essence the things said are true enough. The novel has solid quality and is quite out of the common.

Your reviewer's last sentence puts him out of court to those who really know more than the surface of China. Louise Jordan Miln writes very pretty romances of a China which, however much it ought to be, isn't. She has created a sentimental country of her own with its amiable manners and peculiar habits of speech and found it profitable. But I never heard of their being taken seriously by people with a competent acquaintance with China. On the contrary I have heard them referred to many times as the awful example of that idealized fiction from which China has suffered more than any part of the earth's surface—unless it be the Wild West and the South Seas.

VINCENT GOWEN.

Sagada, Philippine Islands.

Not a Panglossian

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

In a notice of "Humanist Sermons" your reviewer, after taking exception, quite legitimately, to the rhetoric and extravagance of some of the sermons, and to the antiquated view of the so-called human race entertained by the self-styled humanists, says: "It smacks of the turn of the century. It is reminiscent even of Mr. Herbert Spencer."

Now, not every thinker or writer of note at the turn of the century was a shallow optimist or a blind worshipper of Humanity. But let that pass. The reference to Spencer is what I have taken typewriter in hand to protest against rather vehemently.

Spencer, when under thirty, did write a superficial work, "Social Statics," in which he predicted the elimination of evil and the reign of truth and harmony on our earth. But he revised this book in his old age, and in no other is there any excessive admiration for human beings. Your reviewer should glance at "Facts and Comments," at "Man vs. the State," at "Justice" and at the piquant controversy between Spencer and F. Harrison on the Positivists' ridiculous Religion of Humanity. Spencer's indictment of Man was severe and scornful.

Spencer died a pessimist, not an optimist. He complained of the rebarbarization of society by the militarists, of the tyranny of trade unions, of the bankruptcy of Liberalism in politics, of the stupid gospel of majority-rule democracy, of the cultivation of international hatreds and antipathies.

Nothing in Panglossian complacence and sentimentality is in the least reminiscent of Mr. Herbert Spencer. Those who sneer at that acute thinker and militant apostle of individualism merely betray their ignorance of his mature views.

Chicago, Ill. VICTOR S. YARROS.

A Fearsome Thing

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

It was a notable compliment that your make-up miracle man paid me when, in *Points of View* of October 29th, he failed to distinguish between the words of M. Paul Valéry and my own. I am hardened to the accusation of typographic plagiarism, but not yet to the literary variety; so, for the sake of my conscience I must say, regretfully, that the passage beginning with the fifth paragraph—"The artist printer," and ending with the tenth, belongs not to me but at the end of M. Valéry's paper, "The Dual Virtues of a Book." Truly, as he concludes, literally, "It is a splendid and a fearsome thing to be magnificently printed."

BRUCE ROGERS.

A Correction

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

In his memorial article on T. E. Hulme in your issue of October 1, Mr. Montgomery Belgion asserts that I believe, "like all true Americans, in progress;" also, that I am addicted to "the worship of Humanity." A glance at the Introduction to my last volume, "Democracy and Leadership," where I sum up my attitude towards both "progress," as conceived in America, and humanitarianism, should suffice to make plain that this attitude is almost the exact opposite of that ascribed to me by Mr. Belgion.

IRVING BABBITT.

Cambridge, Mass.

Misquotation

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Apropos of the psychology of misquotation, I recall an example tending to confirm Stuart Robertson's theory about confusion between "desolate" and "perilous" seas. I once heard a preacher refer eloquently to "Spenser's beautiful lines,

Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
Makes that and th' action fine.

The path of association is clear: George Herbert—Herbert Spencer—Edmund Spenser. Why assume any link beyond Herbert Spencer? Because no one who knew Herbert Spencer's name at all would think of him as a poet; any one (outside college halls) who knows the name of Edmund Spenser thinks of him as poet and nothing else.

More obvious cases are fairly common. When "Main Street" began to be talked about, a business man of no little reading ascribed the book, in conversation with me, to Upton Sinclair.

JOSEPHINE M. BURNHAM.

University of Kansas.

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A Game

A GAME is being played, which is none the less worth watching because many of the players are not aware that they are in it. On one side are the professional students of English literature, defending their time-honored right to say what the Elizabethan playwrights ought to have written. Attacking this goal, are the London bibliographical crew, captained by Alfred W. Pollard with W. W. Greg and R. B. McKerrow directing the assault. Their battering ram is the assertion that Shakespeare and his fellows knew their own mind as well as their own language, as used by the people who made up their audiences. The point of it all is the assertion, most clearly exemplified by Dover Wilson in the new Shakespeare from the Cambridge University Press, that the plays as printed represent pretty nearly the thing that was seen and heard on the stage, and that this text, tested by a knowledge of theatrical practice and of printing shop habits, but most of all by the normal reactions of ordinary human beings, is much better worth studying than any revision of it in the interests of purer literature. Just at present the bibliographers are making most of the running. They have the advantage of the attack, of a compact group of enthusiastic workers, and of two organs devoted to their interests, *The Library*, edited by Pollard as Secretary of the Bibliographical Society, and Mr. McKerrow's *Review of English Studies*. The followers of the older school of literary pundits are finding themselves strewn along the side lines, not always fully conscious of what hit them.

The bibliographers fortified their position by building up an imposing array of typographical evidence, but since this became secure, they have moved on and are tackling problems where the two theories of literary interpretation meet on even ground. The most recent instance of this appears in the two latest issues of *The Library*, which contain a study by Charles Sisson, wherein he tries to reconstruct a lost play written in collaboration by Decker, Rowley, Ford, and Webster. He establishes the title, "Keep the Widow Waking," the plot, the part written by each author, and fragments of certain speeches.

Whatever its value as literary history or criticism, Mr. Sisson's tale is proof of the old truth that actual happenings are vastly more entertaining than fiction can ever be. Backing up each point by evidence adduced in court (the "actual happening" is in the court room, which of course proves nothing beyond its walls), he carries the story through from the drawing room of a respectable London matron till the play had run its topical course in a second-rate theatre. The widow was well-to-do, and not averse to young men who made eyes at her. She knew well enough what they were after, and kept her suitors dangling, to the evident entertainment of the neighborhood. One of those who watched, studied the situation, and decided to land the lady's property. Cutting in on the recognized suitors, he persuaded her to go slumming. It was a high old party, whereat she was kept going until the marriage had been consummated, legally, ecclesiastically, and in fact.

There is no hushing up a story as good as this, and the owner of a run-down play house saw his chance to make a topical hit. Decker was asked to have a play ready for the opening of the season, six weeks later, with a free hand to get what help he needed. All this was bad enough for the bridal widow's friends, but doubtless the family would have realized that the less said the better, and we would have known nothing about it, if the play had not been advertised just a bit unfairly. To keep it going, a ballad monger was called in, to make a song which should whet the curiosity of the citizens. When he strolled along, singing his verses, in front of the widow's house, her son-in-law lost his temper. First he bribed the censor's clerk and then tried to bring influence to bear on the higher-ups; next he begged the theatre people to call off the play. They did, but not until the houses began to thin out. Meanwhile, he turned the matter over to his lawyer. Little good did this do him, but a later generation which is keenly interested in everything that throws light on early stage conditions might well raise a fund to erect a memorial to his righteous indignation. Everybody concerned was cited into court, and the clerks were kept busy recording all the things they could not remember. It seems quite clear that a pleasant time was had by all, except the son-in-law, and it is not a hazardous guess that even he found the court room pleasanter than his own fireside for the next few days.

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Note and Comment

In the same late issue of *The Library*, for September, F. S. Ferguson presents the score for another game which for absorbing interest, when once fairly started, beats all the varieties of solitaire. This is identifying the actual titles represented in any long-ago list of books. A familiar illustration is the list of titles left by John Harvard to start the college library, which held the interest of successive sons of the university until Alfred C. Potter disposed of all that are findable. Mr. Ferguson's lists range from a catalogue of books belonging to James VI of Scotland in 1583 to inventories of various Scotch booksellers of about that time. They have no particular interest in themselves, but may profitably be studied by anyone who has a similar list and wonders what the entries might mean. The importance of research of this particular sort, for the light thrown upon colonial intellectual conditions, will be appreciated by those who have read Thomas Goddard Wright's "Literary Culture in Early New England."

Among new books in interesting typographic dress announced as published are: "Hymns to Aphrodite," by John Edgar, from the Grabhorn Press in San Francisco; "Phillida and Coridon," by Nicholas Breton, illustrated with pictures in color by Ernest Fiene, from the Spiral Press; and numerous intriguing titles from the Centaur Press, Nonesuch Press, Golden Cockerel Press, and Peter Davies, from Random House, New York.

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THE PHOENIX NEST

LAST week we ran a couplet from *Louis Untermeyer* concerning a generous lady who gave him a scone. *Elinor Wylie* submits the following, not to impeach the generosity of the lady, but as a comment upon pronunciation. She entitles it:

SEVEN BASKETSFUL FOR LOUIS UNTERMEYER

If he asked her for bread and she gave him a scone,
Strike me dead if it is not the Sassenach tone.
I have said, may St. Andrew have mercy upon her;
If she gave me such bread she would give me a scunner.
By the reverend head of each bishop and don,
By the martyr that bled, by the Abbot of Scone,
By St. Leonard, St. Michael, John Knox, and St. John,
If you ask her for bread she should give you a scone.
For sweet Charity's sake, for myself and my erring,
If I ask for a snake may I get caller herring!

We have had extracts sent us from *John Langdon-Davies's* "A Short History of Women," published last Monday by the Viking Press. This book is the November selection of the Literary Guild of America. Among other things, Mr. Langdon-Davies says of American women:

> They will continue the process of deintellectualizing men until these become convenient robots, they will patronize and dominate the arts and literature and reorganize social institutions to suit themselves. They will discover new human relationships and a new attitude of individual towards individual; and at no distant date instead of the phrase "a woman's place is her home," we shall hear repeated interminably and idiotically the words "a man's place is his office." Finally there will be discovered and elaborated a strange concept, the Male Character, and the male human animal will find himself hidden and forgotten beneath an artificial creation embodying all the traits which render him most convenient to his wife.

Dear! Dear! This is indeed terrible! And prophets are so certain! From our own meagre observation, the above is just about as likely to happen as we are ever to win anything at the extremely occasional game of poker in which we indulge. We like and believe in the general attitude toward women in America. It now embodies that chivalry which goes a step further and becomes rationality. Of some husbands their wives doubtless make a convenience. But the proposition is equally true read the other way round. The American business man, even, and he is doubtless the particular type Mr. Langdon-Davies has had under observation, is not, we doubt, so utterly absorbed in his business that he cannot often take an intelligent interest in the intellectual concerns of his wife; and there are a great many women today in this fair land who have just as good business heads as the men. The idea of the parasitic American woman is awfully old stuff. It dates terribly. Most American women that we know have their own work and are almost as independent as the men. If in some quarters there is a solidarity of feminism, it can hardly be called a general condition. There has always been an enormous masculine solidarity. The women certainly have a right to theirs. Both women and men have always wanted to try to change and reshape each other, particularly in the state of holy matrimony. They are likely to be as successful in the future as they have been in the past, which isn't saying much. The woman who simply droops at home waiting patiently for the great conquering male to come in in order that she may immediately rush his dinner on the table and tremble with fear at his frown is not so prevalent as formerly, and let us thank God for it,—or, rather, women themselves. We do get a little annoyed sometimes at this ancient and mossy idea that American men are tyrannized over by their wives, that just because the women have developed their natural abilities in many fields and have won to a new independence it means that the men are eventually going to knuckle under to a matriarchate. It's nonsense. If tyranny is what you are looking for, there are today just as many tyrannical men as there ever were, even in America, and that is to say something. There are certain surface manifestations in a great artificial city like New York that mislead the foreigner. Those surface manifestations are not even true of life in the mass in New York. My, we have certainly become articulate on this subject. We didn't know we knew so much about it! . . .

We have received the following letter:

> In view of the fact that the undersigned are preparing to embark in the menagerie business on rather an extensive scale we are taking the liberty of asking you for a little information which it seems possible you may have at your command.
>
> On page 199 of the issue of your highly-esteemed *Review* dated Oct. 15, near the bottom of column No. 1, in speaking of a drinking horn presented to *Mark Twain*, *The Review* says: "taken from a magnificent animal about forty inches long and about six and a half inches in diameter, wonderfully carved."
>
> Naturally we are more than interested, and beg to ask that, if you are in possession of this knowledge, you will print in an early issue the name of this animal, with its habitat. We have already secured a dodo, and are negotiating for a goofus; but we shall never rest until we have secured a specimen of this remarkable beast.
>
> We shall greatly appreciate your kindness if you will do this for us, and it may be that, sometime in the future, we shall be able to show our appreciation in a more tangible way.
>
> Very respectfully,
> *P. T. Bostock*
> *F. R. Barnum*

P. S.—It might be as well if you were to print the information asked for in "The Phoenix Nest." On one or two occasions of late our mail has been delivered at the wrong door.

A book of poems we can heartily recommend is "Creatures" by *Padraic Colum*, decorated with drawings by *Boris Artzybasheff*. We love animals and Colum's treatment of condors, crows, otters, the jackdaw and the little fox, in beautifully original poetry, is entirely to our taste. Padraic Colum is, of course, one of the most distinguished poets of our time, and not merely in Ireland. . . .

We have received *H. L. Mencken's* brochure on *James Branch Cabell*, published by Robert M. McBride and Company. Appended to it is a complete Cabell bibliography. All collectors of Cabell will need this volume. . . .

And now, little children, we must leave you for the nonce, whatever the nonce is.

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After all, there are some authors meant just for the elect, and apparently FRANZ WERFEL is of that noble company.

A contemplation of the sales chart of *Verdi*—2,405 copies in two years, as against 55,000 abroad—does not depress us. Rather it imbues us with a snobbish, aristocratic, and not unpleasant thrill. This novel of the opera, for at least *The Inner Sanctum* and perhaps 2,403 other souls, belongs with *Jean Christophe*, *Of Human Bondage* and *Moby Dick* as an unforgettable adventure in reading, a memorable intimacy with genius.

We like to share such experiences, but—we hope the sales manager isn't peeking—not too indiscriminately.

Watch WERFEL!

For unmitigated ruthlessness, no reviewer of our time can match G. D. EATON, editor of *Plain Talk*. All the more potent, then, is his tribute to WILL DURANT'S new book, *Transition, A Mental Autobiography:*

> *Transition* I recommend to everyone. It is superbly written and profoundly moving . . . I list the book as biography because it isn't a novel and because it isn't admittedly an autobiography—the first half, as I started out to say, has all the tenderness and humor of *Anatole France's Le Livre de mon Ami*. No novel could be more touching and no poem more beautiful . . .
>
> . . . One sees why DURANT is fond of SPINOZA. The men have much in common. I defy you to forget *Transition;* you can no more do it than you can forget the life of SPINOZA . . .

Transition, by the way, was *The Inner Sanctum's* best-seller this week, just ahead of

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